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INTUITIONS.

INTUITIONS

AND

SUMMARIES OF THOUGHT

By C. N. BOVEE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

"A man would do well to carry a pencil in his pocket, and write down the thoughts of the moment. Those that come unsought for are commonly the most valuable, and should be secured, because they seldom return "

BACON

—— "Every day

A little life, a blank to be inscribed

With gentle *thoughts* "

ROEMER

CAMBRIDGE
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INTUITIONS.

LABOR.

THE root of excellence in every art lies first in natural power, but the flower and fruitage thereof come only from its earnest cultivation. Indeed, next to faith in God is faith in labor.

Labor and Love—I once asked a distinguished artist what place he gave to labor in art. "Labor," he in effect said, "is the beginning, the middle, and the end of art." Turning then to another—"And you," I inquired, "what do you consider as the great force in art?" "Love," he replied. In their two answers I found but one truth.

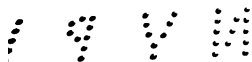
Labor and Manliness—Hard workers are usually honest. Industry lifts them above temptation. So true is it that

"God stands by the true man in his work."

Accomplished workmen are also generally loyal to truth. Their skill is the result of a thorough devotion to their work, and the fidelity which they display in their employments, they carry into their general conduct.

Repose from Toil—To know how to work well is but one half the secret of efficiency in labor: the other half is to know how to rest well. Observe the men who have advanced to eminence, and you will perceive in them a remarkable “off-duty” manner when not occupied. The effects of excessive labor are only to be neutralized by a corresponding measure of repose. We must stop at the point of fatigue, and resume again when the interest recommences, and the powers are recuperated. Spent and exhausted by toil at the close of each busy day, we are then taught, by the nightly mystery of sleep, the necessity of rest.

Rewards of Labor—Nature, in her various departments, has established certain liberal rates of compensation for the labor required of us, but society, in its perversity, has changed the scale, and adopted other and far less equitable rates.



From our present point, true progress is in the direction of a return towards nature's system of equivalents.

Voluntary and Compulsory Labor — Only when compulsory is labor a curse. Voluntary labor is both a blessing in itself, and a cause of blessings. Chosen labor loses its character of work, and becomes play.

"The labor we delight in physics pain."

LANGUAGE.

LANGUAGE was given to us that we might say pleasant things to each other.

The language denotes the man. A coarse or refined character finds its expression naturally in a coarse or refined phraseology.

Fluency — Who complains of a want of language should rather complain of a want of ideas. He forgets that the tongue is subordinate to the character. Richness and variety of language flow from quickness of sensibility, from

the extent and variety of our attainments, and from the sweep and compass of our thoughts. The want of a more copious diction, to borrow a figure from Locke, is caused by our supposing that the mind is like Fortunatus's purse, and will always supply our wants, without our ever putting anything into it. Great earnestness will make a language for one who has no natural command of it.

Greek and Latin — Largely, dead languages are inapplicable for living men. A good rule in rhetoric is one I have heard ascribed to the Duke of Wellington. "Say what you think," he is reported to have said, "and don't quote Latin." Indeed, altogether too much importance is attached to the study of words, and too little to that of things. The young, debarred from the advantages of a liberal education, are apt to think that they can do little without a knowledge of Latin and Greek; but it is truer to say that they could do little with this knowledge.

The Language of the Heart — The language of the heart — the language which "comes from

the heart" and "goes to the heart"—is always simple, always graceful, and always full of power, but no art of rhetoric can teach it. It is at once the easiest and most difficult language: difficult, since it needs a heart to speak it; easy, because its periods, though rounded and full of harmony, are still unstudied.

The Language of Shakspeare—Next to the wealth of genius exhibited in his plays, the most remarkable thing about Shakspeare is his singular directness of expression. His style, except that of certain of his sonnets, and of his other poems, is not the style of his age; it has little or none of the conventional circumlocution of his time; it is ever the language of one who writes "not for a day, but for all time;" the very language of nature itself—of that nature of which, as he tells us, one touch "makes the whole world kin." Shakspeare is indeed the great conservator of our language. He has imparted to it his own immortality. This, so peculiarly true of him, is also measurably true of other great writers. If Homer had never sung, and Plato had never speculated, may it not be doubted whether the language which

they enriched would ever have descended to us?

LAWS.

NO circumstance tends so much to dissolve the authority of laws as their lax administration, and therefore laws should be in themselves mild, but administered with rigor. Laws distinguished for their severity, subject the executive to repeated petitions and temptations to exert the pardoning power, and in that way endanger or defeat the object for which they were established.

LEADERSHIP.

WEAKNESS in the leader is demoralization in the army.

Who aspires to remain leader must keep in advance of his column. His fear must not play traitor to his occasions. The instant he falls into line with his followers, a bolder spirit may throw himself at the head of the movement initiated, and in that moment his leadership is gone.

LIFE.

THE nearest approximation to an understanding of life is to feel it—to realize it to the full—to be a profound and inscrutable mystery.

Mother, wife, children, friends, home, country, business, and ambition—characters, places, and incidents of a dream.

Life is so various that the most active mind cannot hope to become acquainted with more than a few of its particulars. So wide, indeed, is life, so deep its significance, and so inexhaustible its incidents, that the knowledge of the world, ascribed to even veteran experience, is little more than a limited stock of imperfect generalizations. Philosophers have speculated, and divines have preached about life, art has pictured, and science explored it, and still it remains a mystery, a wonder, an unsolved problem. And this life, so rich, so various, so unspeakably grand, so full of beauty and of mystery—the gift of a God to a being formed to study and delight in it—Jenkins, *blazé* at

thirty, has exhausted of all its interest. His astonishing powers, even at that early age, have penetrated all its secrets; he has tasted all its pleasures, and wearied of all its fruits!

Life and its Enjoyments — Life, if not a condition of uninterrupted felicity, is at least full of beautiful episodes. Among its best enjoyments are a quiet walk, with all your impressions to yourself, in a strange city, abounding in quaint architecture, novel costumes, and curious social aspects; a solitary stroll, in the spring of the year, through the beautiful scenes of awakening nature, and an hour or two of reverie on a midsummer's day in the depth and cool seclusion of some venerable wood. Experiences like these are a rich offset to much of the care, many of the sorrows, and all of the weariness that otherwise beset "all times, all seasons, and their change."

Life and its Limitations — Life, like some cities, is full of blind alleys, leading nowhere. The great art is to get and to keep out of them.

How like a railway-tunnel is the poor man's life, with the light of childhood at one end, the intermediate gloom, and only the glimmer of a future life at the other extremity! Life is indeed, to many, a great struggle for bread. The question with them is, not how they shall live, but whether they shall live at all. The obligation to strive after a higher manner of life is indeed fearfully binding upon all who have the means of living up to the requirements of an elevated philosophy, but the good Father will surely judge indulgently those whose strength and time are chiefly consumed in efforts to live in any way and by any means.

Life Meditative and Life Active—A perfect life implies an equal development of the life active and the life contemplative. It even improves us as thinkers to become, to a certain extent, actors—and the converse. A merely active life narrows our horizon, and makes us observant only of what is passing under our immediate ken. Impairing our sensibility to what has been and may be, it thus destroys, as it were, our relation to the past and to the future.

Life and its Objects and Obligations — The ambitious value life principally as a means, the Christian regards it as a state of probation, the good man as a sphere of duty, and the philosopher as all these; but inferior minds have this in common with inferior animals, that they value life for itself only.

The incidents of each day, taken separately, seem poor and meagre; but considered as parts of the comprehensive scheme of life, they derive importance as adding to or subtracting from its proper worth and nobleness.

Life is indeed either a rich possession or a poor, according as it is made subservient to noble aims or ignoble pleasures. Unhappily, we live more according to circumstances than in submission to principles. The life even of a just man is a round of petty frauds; that of a knave a series of greater. We degrade life by our follies and vices, and then complain that the unhappiness which is only their accompaniment is inherent in the constitution of things.

Life and its Possibilities — Life is enjoyed to

the utmost only by those who feel, what is true of us all, that they are formed to vast possibilities of excellence—whose years pass in a perpetual round of study, inquiry, observation, and practical endeavor, rest itself being with them only a change of toil, or a state of preparation for renewed labor.

Life and Progress—Following the same law of development, in life, as in the sciences, the mind, in its progress from youth to age, must pass from smaller to larger considerations, beginning with the first as the only certain means of ending at the latter. Indeed, life is being gradually reduced to a science—its aims regulated, its principles established, its methods determined.

Value of Life—What Solomon said of the vanity of life—"Vanity of vanities; all is vanity"—was probably but the expression of a momentary feeling, and is not to be believed for more than a moment. Life cannot well appear mean to one who uses it nobly.

LIGHT.

THE light in the world comes principally from two sources—the sun, and the student's lamp.

Influence of Light to awaken or modify Sensibility—Besides its other admirable properties, light has that of developing the feelings. That it has this power is indicated by the poets, in their frequent use of such phrases as “the cheerful light of morn,” “a dim religious light,” “the purple light of love,” “the tender light of the moon,” and so on, through a long series of descriptive expressions, ending with that delicious one of Mrs. Norton, “the love light in her eye.” Again: Place a number of persons in a room dimly lighted, and they will become taciturn and moody; put the light altogether out, and they will fall asleep; then awaken and lead them into a chamber brilliantly lighted, and they will probably soon become full of animation.

LITERATURE.

TO grapes there are four parts—an exterior coat, the pulp, the seeds, and their juices. In the production of wine the three first are thrown away, and the latter alone preserved. And yet who will say that there is not more of the grape retained than rejected? It is thus with books. The worth of a book is a matter of expressed juices.

Books as Expressive of the Characters of their Authors—Books only partially represent their authors. The writer is always greater than his work. There is in nearly all of us the substance, not of one, or a few, but of many books, of more than average merit, were they only written out. Most books fail, not so much from a want of ability in their authors, as from an absence in their productions of a thorough development of their ability.

Facility in Author-craft—Mere ordinary writing, when one gets used to it, is as easy as talking or walking. All that is necessary to make the labor of writing even an agreeable

employment, is that we have first a subject, and next a sufficiently pressing call, inward or from without, to write upon it, just as to talk with facility and pleasure, one must have something to tell, and a disposition to communicate it. But as to the quality of the writing, — that is quite a different thing. That is according to degree of natural capacity and acquired skill. Aptitude avails little without experience, and experience is little without aptitude. In literature, too, as in every other art, it is better to do a little well than much indifferently. Indeed, the condition upon which an author claims, and upon which we give him our attention, is that he will make a short story of it, and not abuse our patience. From him we require, more fact, more thought, and less rhetoric.

Fashion in Literature — There is a fashion in letters which regulates the books we purchase, and the authors we talk about, just as there is always a reigning mode in dress, furniture, music, or dancing — one being only a little more enduring than the other.

First Productions — A first achievement in

literature has seldom much worth in itself, but is chiefly valuable as a thing of promise. It deserves rather to be considered as the first blossom of a garden, destined, it may be, to produce many flowers.

Legacies to Literary Men—Rich men, who desire to dispose of themselves and their property with éclat, and with benefit to their reputation, to the public, and to posterity, may do so by kindly dying and leaving a competency to “struggling genius.” “Struggling genius” will be much obliged to them, and posterity, perhaps, will cherish, with lasting honor, a remembrance of their liberality. Let them, then, emulate the generosity of Raisley Calvert, by whom, through a legacy of £900, Wordsworth was relieved from embarrassment, and enabled to establish his name as the greatest in the poetical literature of his time.*

Manners of the Learned—The greatness of learning should appear in its representatives.

* But for Calvert, says January Searle, Wordsworth must have settled down as a schoolmaster, which, De Quincey says, he once thought of doing.

But, unhappily, the learned man does not always present a brilliant figure in society. However admirable he may be in his library, he sometimes fails to unite to his character of an accomplished scholar, the manners, ease, and dignity of a man of the world. And with learned women, also, it is sometimes little better. It is their occasional inattention to the duties and graces of social life that has made the phrase "blue-stocking" one of such stinging reproach. Of what use is it that a woman can talk about Bacon, if she cannot cook a slice of it? and how inconsistent is it for her to be versed in matters of taste, while she neglects good taste in her general appearance? Indeed, women should not affect great learning, if they desire to continue, as they are, the proper objects of admiration to the sterner sex. An appearance of intellectual superiority in a woman piques a man's vanity, and makes him envy where he would otherwise revere. Conceding women to be the better half of creation, men balance the account with their pride by assuming to be the wiser half.

"For contemplation he and valor formed;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace."

Woman's power is over the affections. A beautiful dominion is hers, but she risks its forfeiture when she seeks to extend it.

Literature and Money-Making—A taste, like that of the poet Rogers, for making both money and books, exposes its possessor to a destructive cross-fire of criticism. Men of business, peradventure, will concede that such a one can make a good enough book, but as for making a good bargain — “Ah! that's a trifle above his capacity,” while his brother *litterateurs*, it may be, will just hint that the style of his books is below that of his dinners, or that he might have done something respectable in their way, if he had not lessened his thought to enlarge his income. And not without reason! An eager pursuit of fortune is inconsistent with a severe devotion to truth. The heart must grow tranquil before the thought can become searching.

Mysticism in Literature—Directness of expression is a sign of honesty, and clearness of strength.* Besides, it is the duty of every

* “Clear writers,” says Landor, “do not seem as deep as they are; the turbid look the most profound.”

writer to render the truths he has to communicate as briefly and explicitly as possible.* What then are we to think of the mystic, who, finding Truth upon the highway, by virtue of his office imprisons her in paradox. His obscure meanings, that waste our time in a vain effort to translate them, are worse than none. Riddles are for children. What Horace Walpole, in one of his letters to Lady Ossory, says upon the subject of paradoxes, will just as well apply to all that class of writers who affect obscurity, hoping to have it taken for profundity. "I look upon paradoxes," says he, "as the impotent efforts of men who, not having capacity to draw attention and celebrity from good sense, fly to eccentricities to make themselves noted."

Novelties in Art and Literature—A peculiar work in any art must not be too hastily judged. New styles have to create new tastes, and established methods have always interested partisans.

* The writer of these volumes aims at the peculiarity in the art of expression of presenting each paragraph, and often each sentence, complete within itself, and yet connected, more or less intimately, where the subjects are kindred, with what precedes and follows it. Added to this, he endeavors always to stop at the point of suggestion.

Usually, whenever any extraordinary novelty is introduced to the world, in art or literature, men look into each other's eyes in mute, sympathetic wonder, and with an expression upon their faces of "What are we to think of this, neighbors?" and so they continue, till some one, bolder than the rest, breaks the silence with a proclamation of vehement praise or objection, whereupon they all join chorus in singing pæans of joy, or in uttering prophecies of failure. And so the many are led by the few.

After a period, the new thought or feeling which a writer utters or suggests will cease to appear new, and even be adjudged commonplace; but if the form of his expression be perfect, his work will still endure, despite the lapse of time and the world's mutations.* Pope's "Essay on Man," and, in a lesser degree, Montesquieu's "Spirit of Laws," are instances in point. The former, though regarded for a time as a summary of boldly original ideas, is now rather looked upon as a series of obvious propositions, but all of them rendered with so much

* "Without grace," says Horace Walpole, "no book can live, and with it the poorest may have its life prolonged."

grace, such precision, and such a concentration of expression, as to make them, as a whole, truly a marvel of condensed statement.

Learned Recluses—In secluding himself too much from society, an author is in danger of losing that intimate acquaintance with life which is the only sure foundation of power in a writer. To form his mind, too, the recluse scholar crooks and deforms his body. He sacrifices so much to the Muses, that he has not enough left for an offering to the Graces and Virtues. He dies in preparing to live. Rather than this, what a man knows should find its expression in what he does. The value of superior knowledge is chiefly in that it leads to a performing manhood.

Literary Soothsayers—Coleridge,* Carlyle (a

* Coleridge's prose works repay us for their perusal by their suggestiveness, and in about an equal degree perplex us by their indeterminateness. They abound in luminous ideas and important truths, but as distinct and final expositions of the subjects treated of, they have less value. He wrote as he is said to have talked—everybody is edified, but nobody clearly understands his drift. Something of his want of clearness is doubtless owing to the inordinate length of many of his sentences. Some of these seem to have

writer of good thoughts in bad language *), and Emerson, in the department of prose, and Tennyson † and the Brownings in that of verse,

been constructed, like Noah's ark, to take in everything. But aside from this, he had, as Hugh Miller wrote of Lamarch, "a trick of dreaming when wide awake, and calling his dreams philosophy." Again: He is interesting to his readers, not so much from what he does say, as from what he is always going to say. Beyond all other writers, he excels in the art of exciting expectation. He entices us on from page to page by magnificent promises of important revelations. He is as Moses to the Israelites. He undertakes to lead us into a land overflowing with milk and honey, but leaves us on the way, though not without regaling us, in the course of our journey, with an abundant supply of heavenly manna.

* Carlyle is a sort of Caliban in letters. "He has picked up everything dissonant and thorny in language, out of which he has compounded his vocabulary," says Schlegel of Caliban. And so of Carlyle. The power he exerts over his readers is shown in the circumstance that few of the reviewers of his works have been able to criticise them without more or less falling into his style. But then the imitation ceases with the occasion that gives rise to it—an indication that the impression made by him is after all not lasting. The great qualities of style are simplicity, directness, precision, force, and grace. Of these, Carlyle has but one—force.

† Tennyson's poems, however, have this peculiarity, that they disclose more on a second than on a first reading. Full of subtle and elusive graces, each of his poems—and especially his longer ones—has to be understood as a whole before it can be fully appreciated in its parts. Without the commanding simplicity and directness of the greater poets, he is still an exquisite artist, and his inimitable delicacies of phrase and feeling are among the notable things in English literature.

constitute a new school in letters — the oracular school — the leading feature of which is, a certain pretence of occult and profound meanings. They are the soothsayers of literature. Consult them, and they put their wise fingers to their learned noses, and tell you, with a mysterious wave of their goose-quills, “Hush, listen, the oracle is about to speak!” And the oracle does speak, in words dark with inscrutable meanings. I say this with reservations as to each, and with especial reluctance as to Emerson, because I believe, with all his mysticism, that he has added as much to the common stock of the world’s thought as almost any writer now living.*

Literary Subjects — In treating a subject not already in itself interesting, the literary aspirant has the twofold labor to perform of making both his subject and his treatment of it attractive. The selection of a subject is therefore to the author what choice of position is to the general — once skilfully determined, the battle is already half won. Of a few writers it may be said, that they are popular in despite of their

* See, for a later estimate of Emerson, note on page 88 of first volume.

subjects — but of a great many more it may be observed that they are popular because of them.

Literary Worship — There is a religion not recognized among systems of worship, but none the less real — Shakspeare worship. And not the worst religion either. Among the most cultivated persons, speaking the English tongue, the worship of Shakspeare ranks next to the worship of Truth. And indeed, if I were a woman, I would love no man who did not love Shakspeare next to Truth and myself.

Writing and Talking — The art of writing well is much less difficult of acquirement than the sister art of talking well. In the former we have the selection of the subject; we can proceed deliberately, and are guided in its treatment by certain known examples and established principles: but in the latter we are more obliged to take the subject instantly as it comes, to find resources for its treatment in ourselves, and to depend more upon our natural qualities. The talker, like the Sultan in Johnson's *Irene*, —

“From himself derives his greatness.”

LITTLE THINGS.

IT WILL not do to despise little things:—
 life and great things are made up of
 them.*

LIVING AND DYING.

IT is easier to die bravely than to live so.
 On this subject I like the remark of Sir
 Philip Sidney. "Whether your time calls
 you," said he, "to live or die, do both like a
 prince."

* If Thomas Noon Talfourd had written only the following lines, they alone would have indicated an uncommon sweetness of character, and a rare elevation of genius.

" 'Tis a little thing
 To give a cup of water; yet its draught
 Of cool refreshment, drained by fevered lips,
 May give a shock of pleasure to the frame,
 More exquisite than when nectarean juice
 Renews the life of joy in happiest hours.
 It is a little thing to speak a phrase
 Of common comfort, which, by daily use,
 Has almost lost its sense; yet on the ear
 Of him who thought to die unmourned 'twill fall
 Like choicest music, fill the glazing eye
 With gentle tears, relax the knotted hand
 To know the bonds of fellowship again."

LOSSES.

WE become sensible of our blessings chiefly through their loss. Thus, let one lose a limb, and he will at once become sensible, as he never was before, of what a blessing it was to him. Again: We increase the sum of our losses when we lose temper over them.

And then: He has not lost all who has still the future left him. What is taken from the fortune, also, may haply be so much lifted from the soul. And still again: The greatness of a loss, as the proverb suggests, is determinable, not so much by what we have lost, as by what we have left. Hume tells a pleasant story, that illustrates this, of certain monks who one day threw themselves prostrate before Henry the Second, and complained, with much lamentation, that their abbot had cut off three dishes from their table. "How many has he left you?" said the monarch. "Ten only," replied the afflicted monks. "I myself," exclaimed the king, "never have more than three," and ordered their abbot to reduce theirs to the same number.

LOVE.

I'LL sing of heroes and of kings,
In mighty numbers mighty things.
Begin, my Muse! but lo! the strings
To my great song rebellious prove;
The strings will sound of nought but love!"

Love is of such superlative worth, that it is more honorable to be its victim than its conqueror.

Love makes a few weeks so rich that all the rest of our lives seems poor in comparison.

So far as the great purpose of happiness is concerned, it is better to have the love of the sweet mistress of our affections, than the homage of the multitude. What is even the poet's wreath, to the wreath made by woman's arms as they encircle you?

"What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleasures, and its nonsense all,
Who in each other clasp?"

If the intentions of nature were not defeated by our perversity, every woman would be the object, and every man the subject, of love.

Love's Discernment — Love gives a keener insight. It lends, like a squint, "a precious seeing to the eye." It alone divines that deeper well of tenderness in the heart, whose depth and purity are never more than partially seen into, and then only by the love-anointed eyes of wife, husband, or lover.

"And man first learns how great his heart
When he has learned to love."

We love only partially till we know thoroughly. Grant that a closer acquaintance reveals weakness; — it will also disclose strength.

Duration of Love — Love outlasts the beauty of person that excites it. The period of the husband's love for his wife is not coextensive only with the duration of her personal charms. Oh, no! In matrimony, as the old graces decay new attractions arise, that confirm and extend the love, and are more worthy of it.

And yet: The lover who vows eternal fidelity to her he loves, may be a very good lover, but he is as certainly a very poor philosopher. As well might one who loves pickles propose

to love them eternally, when, from a change in his stomach, or a chance surfeit of them, they may at any time become his aversion. The lover, when asked by his mistress if he will always love her thus, can only truly answer as to his present, not his future condition of mind. At least, this is in accordance with a principle laid down by Rochefoucauld.* “The duration of our passions,” says he, “no more depends on ourselves, than the duration of our lives.”

Early Loves — Few marry their first loves; fewer ought to. The love of the very young is like the love of children for sweetmeats: they usually outgrow it. Their immature love is the first of love's four stages — love in the germ, love in the bud, love in the blossom, and love in full flower. As few germs, comparatively, live to be flowers: so few of our early loves ripen into “the bright consummate flower” of affection founded on appreciation.

* Rochefoucauld's *Maxims*, however, are of value, not so much from their enabling us to form a true estimate of men, as of — Rochefoucauld.

Falling in Love—Perhaps men more frequently fall in love unconsciously than women, from the latter having a habit, natural to their situation, of regarding every young man who approaches them as a possible candidate for the honors and profits of matrimony. “Is he a good catch?” is the first question with them. “Can he be caught?” is the second; and these answered satisfactorily, they proceed to bait for him.

Love after Forty—Nature punishes celibacy with a loss of the more genial qualities. Thus, character, in single men, seldom affords much to love after forty.* It may excite esteem, and even reverence, but rarely love. With maids, the conditions of love are lost even earlier:—the dew of youthful feeling (with noble exceptions) is off the flower of womanhood before thirty.

Love's Language—Love has its mute as well as its audible modes of expression. To

* Indeed, to successfully resist the allurements of love until time has overtaken us, argues not so much an uncommon force of discretion, as an extraordinary weakness of the affections.

be loved without being told of it in some way — mutely or audibly — is like smoking in the dark. One must see the smoke of his cigar to enjoy it, and be told of the love that is hoarded for him, or else he is defrauded of the rapture that should attend it.

None but those who have loved can be supposed to understand the oratory of the eye, the mute eloquence of a look, or the conversational powers of the face. Love's sweetest meanings are unspoken; the full heart knows no rhetoric of words, and resorts to the pantomime of sighs and glances.

Love-Letters — A profusion of fancies and quotations is out of place in a love-letter. True feeling is always direct, and never deviates into by-ways to cull flowers of rhetoric. The most sensible love-letters extant are those of Lady Mary Wortley Montague. There is scarcely a trope, a simile, or a figure of speech in them. Strangely enough, the most purely artificial of women wrote the most natural of love-letters. Though celebrated for her wit, she here drops the character, and speaks, as she should do,

only as a woman — writing what she feels, and feeling what she writes.

Love-letters are ever a mixture of bitter and sweet. There is always in them a something not communicated, a something too much, or a something too little, that fails to satisfy the demands of an ardent affection. It is in vain that the writer assures his fair correspondent, in the most explicit terms, that his tenderest affections are hers. His present warmth is well enough, but "his former coldness is still unexplained," or, "will he always feel so?" or, "lovers are fickle, and can change their vows as often as occasions serve." Nor will repeated protestations cure the evil. Quarrels are necessary to the existence of love — or the requirements of a sensitive affection are not easily gratified. "He says that he loves me, that he adores me," cries a still dissatisfied beauty, pettishly throwing her lover's letter from her — "why don't he tell me what it is he loves me for?" She wanted what the lawyers call a bill of particulars, to be told (as what woman does not, to be sure?) of her perfections in detail. Ah, my friends, Love, like a froward boy,

with his hands full of sugar-plums, still cries for more.

Manners of Lovers—It is the privilege of the lover to be at one and the same time in two situations:—when beside his mistress he is also beside himself. Indeed, just at the moment when lovers are most interesting to each other, they most provoke a smile from those who witness their endearments. What to them is an affair of the heart, is sometimes to third parties an affair of the risibles.

In love affairs, also, there is a point when the passion in public discloses itself in an assumed but ill-disguised affectation of indifference. Thus, a betrothed couple, who spend half their time in private in telling how much they love each other, sometimes in society appear hardly to know each other.

And again: In the company of one's mistress it is difficult to avoid two follies—rhapsody and silence. Fortunately, the first is never esteemed by her as folly, and the other is considered as the stillness of brooding love.

Indeed, we laugh at the vagaries of Don Quixote, and are amused at the easy credulity of his redoubtable squire, Sancho Panza, but neither the mad fancies of the knight of La Mancha, nor the gross simplicity of his entertaining follower, are at all comparable to the aberrant conceits, the humorous fantasies, of love-sick swains.

"Love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit."

Perverted Love — When a woman cannot be turned from her love by the disclosed unworthiness of her lover, it is not his character that she loves, but his person.

Lovers' Quarrels — Their love for each other is only partial who differ much and widely. When a loving heart speaks to a heart that loves in return, an understanding is easily arrived at.

We should do by our friends' as lovers by their mistresses' faults: be blind to them when we can, incredulous when told of them, and when we cannot deny, excuse them.

Successful Love—Love triumphant takes a load off our hearts, and—puts it upon our shoulders.

Unsuccessful Love—There are two classes of disappointed lovers—those who are disappointed before marriage, and those who are disappointed after it. Let the sighing swain, who has not prospered in his suit, console himself with this assurance—that by his present disappointment he has perhaps escaped another much more serious.

Love's Vagaries—Our estimates of love are full of contradictions, and rightly, for love itself is so. As Shakespeare indicates, in its nature love most resembles the weather, whose principal property is its changeableness. Does not even Love's fogleman, Tom Moore, tell us in one place that "naught in life is half so sweet as Love's young dream," and in another, that "Love is scarce worth the repose it costs?"

Indeed, love delights in paradoxes. Saddest when it has most reason to be gay, sighs are

the signs of its deepest joy, and silence is the expression of its yearning tenderness.

What a Woman loves best in a Lover — Women love to be wooed with vigor. You may offend them by being too cold, but ardor in you enkindles it in them. They rather approve than otherwise of that method of courtship adopted on a memorable occasion with the Sabines.* So much enterprise, they are apt to think, ought not to fail of its reward. The reason why a soldier stands the best chance with the fair sex is, that he courts, as it were, sword in hand.

Love and Ambition — Perhaps a woman has this to apprehend in marrying a very ambitious man, that she will become much more an appendage to his fortunes — a plaything for idle

* "The women who had been carried off," says Livy, speaking of the Sabine women, "soon became reconciled to their situation;" a result due, as he tells us, to "the soothing behavior of their husbands, who urged, in extenuation of the violence they had been tempted to commit, the excess of passion, and the force of love: arguments," the historian naively adds, "than which there can be none more powerful to assuage the irritation of the female mind."

hours—than a part of himself. Except in his softer moments,

“His thoughts are all on honor bent,
He ne’er can stoop to love;
No lady in the land has power
His frozen heart to move.”*

At least, neither love nor ambition, as it has often been shown, can brook a division of its empire in the heart.

Love is an ardent desire for the esteem, the admiration, and the affection of one—of one only; ambition, an equally ardent desire for the affection, the esteem, or the admiration of many. It is because it naturally becomes, to aspiring natures, a more permanently engrossing passion to be the object of these feelings to a number than to one, that it has been said—“Love leads to ambition, but from ambition to love there is no return.”

Love and Friendship—On the other hand—it will not do to count upon the friendship of

* Slightly altered from the ballad of “Lord Henry and Fair Catherine.”

one in love. The taste of love gives a distaste for friendship. Women, especially, grow cold towards their intimates as they grow fervid towards their lovers. Love's impassioned spirit disdains the lesser joys of cold regard.

Love and Hatred — Johnson loved a good hater: commend me rather to a good lover. Always there is a choice between loving and hating. The existence of so much love in the world is a proof that there is in it much of the excellence that justifies so exalted a passion; and if an object or a character is not attractive, it can be passed for one that is. There is ever enough in the world to love to make hatred unnecessary.

Love, Hatred, and Indifference — And yet, in love, where there is hatred there is hope. Hatred is a misdirection of the powers of love — a service of love's forces under its enemy's banner, from which a returning sense of their proper allegiance may haply restore them. But indifference is fatal; for here the passions — the constituents of love — are absolutely wanting.

Love and Prudence—Perhaps a woman puts the affection of her lover at risk when she lets him see that she is his entirely—that her love for him cannot be deepened or quickened. We love less what is all our own than what is but partly gained. But then, love that is turned aside by prudential considerations is not love, but only a sentimental speculation, from which the speculator is prepared to withdraw as soon as he discovers that it is not likely to prove profitable. A genuine passion is like a mountain stream: it admits of no impediment: it cannot go backwards: it must go forward.

Love and Reason—We cannot reason ourselves into love, nor can we reason ourselves out of it, which suggests that love and reason have little to do with each other. Indeed, men in love never reason upon the nature and effects of love. Like poor wretches carried along by a cataract, lovers are too agitated to calculate the depth or the swiftness of the current that is sweeping them on, it may be, to destruction.

Love's Retrospect—It is not without a touch of heartache, mingled with something of passion

and self-reproach, that one recalls, after an interval of years, the long-departed emotions incident to that period when he first loved, it may be, "not wisely, but too well." As he contrasts his existing condition of torpor, the reduced level of his present feelings, and the insignificant part he has since sustained in life, with the quickening and vivifying power, the exaltation of his sensibilities, and the high-wrought resolves that waited upon the passion that then held sway over him, not without reason does he feel as if he had indeed lost the better part of himself.

"Love wakes men, once a life-time each;
They lift their heavy lids and look;
And lo! what one sweet page can teach
They read with joy, then shut the book.
And some give thanks, and some blaspheme,
And most forget; but either way,
That and the child's unheeded dream
Is all the light of all their day." *

* Coventry Patmore.





MAJORITIES.

A BETTER principle than this, that "the majority shall rule," is this other, that justice shall rule. "Justice," says the Code of Justinian, "is the constant and perpetual desire to render every man his due."

"One and God," says Frederick Douglass, "make a majority." What a fine scorn, too, of mere superiority of numbers, is that expressed in the saying of Virgil, quoted by Bacon, that "it never troubles the wolf how many the sheep be."

A minority in the right, associated by convictions of right, has the strength of reason against the brute force of numerical superiority. It has, what the majority wants, a future. And then, the hopes of the generous for the world prefigure its future.

MANNERS.

THE importance of good manners is well indicated in a remark of Alexander Carlyle: "Manners," says he, "are stronger than laws."

Bad manners are a species of bad morals. A conscientious man will not grossly offend in that way. As Goethe says, "there is no outward sign of courtesy that does not rest on a deep moral foundation."

High principle, associated with manners that repel, and a disposition harsh and severe, has its basis in the pride that disdains the meanness of knavery, rather than in the goodness which loves the good for its own sake. With Orville Dewey, I do not believe in "the goodness of disagreeable people."*

Constraint — A constrained and embarrassed address arises from one of three sources: excessive sensibility, an inability to appreciate the cir-

* A good-natured disposition, however, is often associated with an ill-natured set of nerves.

cumstances of a position, or—conscious meanness.

Manners of Great Men—Men who have achieved greatness in the closet, or in the more stirring field of action, do not always exhibit the evidences of their greatness in their bearing, but rather suffer by comparison with an accomplished man of the world. This may very well be, since it may be said, that while the former have been more solicitous to acquire the “inward and invisible graces,” the latter have been more occupied in cultivating the “outward signs.” But always, a brave heart redeems an awkward carriage.

Treatment of Company—An ill-composed spirit in the host puts his guests ill at ease. In order to put your guests at ease, be yourself at ease. Be at home within yourself, and all within your house will be so.

MARRIAGE.

IT is beyond capacity to estimate the benefits of marriage. Hyperbole itself is tame to

express the blessings that flow from this great source of happiness. It is an overflowing bounty of so rich and generous a nature, that it would beggar the imagination of a celibate to conceive of half the comforts he loses in his forlorn state. The world could almost as well dispense with the light and warmth of the sun, as with the institution of marriage. Without marriage in the world chaos itself would come again.*

A man happily married wonders at nothing more than how he could have remained single so long. Happiness has ceased to be a hope, and become a reality with him.

Indeed, unmarried men and women may be divided into two great classes—the suffering million, and the comfortable ten.

Marriage, rightly concluded, is an incarnation of love—poetry expressed in action—a sweet

* A word here as to monasteries and nunneries. Women were created to be married, and men to marry them. These clear intentions of nature, monasteries and nunneries defeat. And yet, there is something beautiful in the fundamental idea upon which they are based—of a perfect consecration of the affections to a higher life.

embellishment of an otherwise prosaic existence. Said Macdonald Clarke, with a rare felicity of expression — “An electric temperament can never do anything worthy its native powers, till 'tis softened and soothed amid the tender tranquillity of domestic life: till there is one gentle being found to cast around it the cooling charm of her own meek attributes, and draw it upwards to the Almighty.” And again he says, quite as finely — “The heart must be at rest, before the mind, like a quiet lake under an unclouded summer evening, can reflect the solemn starlight, and the splendid mysteries of heaven.”

Before and after Marriage — Men and women before marriage are as figures and ciphers. The woman is the cipher, and counts for nothing till she gets the figure of a husband beside her, when she becomes of importance herself, and adds tenfold to the sum of his. But this, it must be observed, occurs only when she gets and remains on the right side of him, for when she shifts from this position, he returns to his lesser estate, and she to her original insignificance.

Upon marrying, we need most to pray for one of two things in our partners—the love that blinds, or the good-nature that excuses.

Marriage and Enterprise—A latent discontent is the secret spur of most of our enterprises. Marriage, by making us more contented, causes us often to be less enterprising.

Marriage in France and in America—In France, marriage with women is an introduction to society, in the United States it is a withdrawal and a seclusion from it. The result is that in the Republic the brilliant maid in six months after wedlock becomes the sober matron, while abroad the timid girl, in the same period, ripens into the accomplished lady. In the latter more proper order of things the grub changes to the butterfly—in the former the butterfly retrogrades to the grub.

Marriage in the Olden Time—In the “good old times” of feudal law, if the heir of an estate was a female, the king was entitled to offer her any husband of her rank he thought proper; and if she refused him, she forfeited her land.

"Even a male heir could not marry without the royal consent; and it was usual to pay large sums for the liberty of making their own choice in marriage." Lovers of to-day, at liberty to marry as soon as you can get the consent of ma and pa, or of that gruff old uncle whose character is so faithfully depicted in the comedies! what think you of restrictions like these in the course of true love? Truly, in comparison, your ways are "ways of pleasantness," and your paths paths of peace.

MELANCHOLY.

IN every moment of conscious happiness there mingles an undertone of sadness. However full of enjoyment the present, the future is always uncertain, and it is the feeling of this—the feeling that we are of the class of ephemera—perpetually recurring in the rarest and sweetest moments of existence, that constitutes, more than any other, the "one touch of nature that makes the whole world kin." Perhaps it was this pervading sentiment of his mortality, subtilized and diffused throughout his whole being, with its concomitant, an insinuated doubt of his immortality, coiled at the root of his every feel-

ing, that was the secret of the infinite melancholy that preyed upon the sensitive nature of the poet Gray, and which at length, in his beautiful elegy, found that touching expression to which the human heart will forever respond.*

* Gray wrote but little, but that little is of priceless value. As well in the general merit of his poems, as in the singular beauty of particular passages, he is not surpassed by any of the poets, Shakspeare and Milton alone excepted. What a description, for instance, is this —

"Fair hushes the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow and Pleasure at the helm."

Or who does not recollect his inimitable picture of the truant —

"Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a noise in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy."

Or this again of the Theban eagle —

"Soaring with supreme dominion
Through the azure depths of air."

And then, too, what a wealth of beauty does he sometimes compress in single lines, as in his

"Thoughts that breathe and words that burn."

Or,

"Truths avowed by fairy fiction dress."

And how much of descriptive power in

"The heavy call of increase-breathing morn."

And what a fulness of sense in

"The paths of glory lead but to the grave!"

Thinking of these, and of the kindred beauties that flash

Melancholy is the protest of a mind naturally earnest, against a way of life, it may be, unnaturally frivolous.

Melancholy sees the worst of things—things as they may be, and not as they are. It looks upon a beautiful face, and sees but a grinning skull.

Melancholy as an Accomplishment—Among the delusions of our unripe years is one that melancholy may be cultivated as an accomplishment; that an air of sadness worn on the brow has more charms for the youth of the opposite sex than the flush of animation upon the cheek, or the light of a glad soul beaming from its beautiful window, the eye. Under such a persuasion, young gentlemen indulge morbid fancies, or entertain thoughts upon “the ills of life and the vanity of human wishes.” A young lady, too, may be both gifted and accomplished, but she is not the less likely to affect an interesting melancholy, to profess a fondness for Young’s

along his pages, one may almost exclaim with him, in a passion of mingled admiration and envy,

“Victims of glory, spare my aching sight!”

"Night Thoughts," or a passionate admiration of that most unhappy of poets, Lord Byron. But what a mistake is theirs! The best test, both of a man's wisdom and of a woman's goodness, is—their cheerfulness. Sullen and good, morbid and wise, are impossible conjunctions. As a companion, when one is not cheerful, he is almost invariably stupid. An habitually sad face seldom gets into much credit with the world, and rarely deserves to. And even more emphatically, causeless sadness is practical atheism: or it is a proof of a mind diseased: or it is, as Montaigne calls it, a "base passion."

"Would wisdom for herself be woo'd,
And wake the foolish from his dream,
She must be glad as well as good,
And must not be but seem.
Beauty and joy are hers by right,
And, knowing this, I wonder less
That she 's so scorned when falsely dight
In misery and ugliness."*

* Coventry Patmore.

MISANTHROPY.

THE opinions of the misanthropical rest upon this very partial basis, that they adopt the bad faith of a few as evidence of the worthlessness of all.*

MISCONSTRUCTION.

WE stand too much in dread of misconstruction, and spend half our days in making apologies and explanations, instead of quietly taking an appeal from the hour to the year, and letting the actual in our lives contradict the seeming.

Much misconstruction of character arises out of our habit of assigning a motive for every

* It has been suggested by the German critics, with their usual acuteness, that "Timon of Athens," the least attractive of Shakspeare's plays, was left by the poet in an unfinished state, and there is much in the nature of internal evidence to support the hypothesis. Besides, from the broadly benevolent nature of the bard, whose charity was as universal as his genius, we may suppose that he found in the subject he had selected but little that was congenial with the natural benignity of his temper, and that he at length abandoned in disgust, and before its completion, the portrayal of a character so offensive and unnatural as that of a man-hater.

action—whereas a good many of our acts are performed without any motive.

MISTAKES.

IT is only an error of judgment to make a mistake, but it argues an infirmity of character to adhere to it when discovered. Or, as the Chinese better say: “The glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time you fall.”

MODESTY.

MODESTY, that becomes all men, is especially becoming in one who has great merit, in that he has everything to excuse pride. Modesty and merit are indeed a handsome couple.

MONEY.

ONE must have been, at some time or other, in a situation where a small sum was as necessary almost as life itself, with no more ability to raise it than to raise the dead, before he can fully appreciate the value of money.

And yet: it is an ill practice that rates the worth of all things by a pecuniary standard. Money is only thus far a standard of value: that which it can measure is perishable; that which it cannot is immortal.*

MONUMENTS.

THE first and last impression of a monument should be, not of its cost or dimensions, but of its beauty and appropriateness. A tribute of affection to the dead, it should not commemorate the pride or the fortune of the living.

MOTTOES.

A FASHION formerly obtained in Europe, and still prevails in some parts of the

* At a social gathering one evening a lady exhibited to her guests an interesting relic—an old chair, which, she said, one of her ancestors had brought with him to America in 1620, in the May Flower. “Indeed,” exclaimed one of the guests—a learned Professor—“Why, that’s a valuable chair! It’s worth fifty dollars.” This was almost as much as if a lover, upon imprinting upon the lips of his mistress the first kiss of affection, should tell her, “My dear, that’s very nice. It’s worth fifty dollars:” or as if a convert recently received into the church, and congratulated on having made his “calling and election sure,” should reply, “Yes, it is a great satisfaction. It’s worth fifty dollars.”

Orient, of having painted over the doors of the principal rooms of the better class of houses, some highly suggestive line or verse like the following:—

"Would'st have a friend; would'st know what friend is best!

Have God thy friend, who passeth all the rest."

Is it not to be regretted that a mode of decoration so purely intellectual should ever have fallen into disuse?

MOUNTAINS—A THOUGHT AMONG THEM.*

GOLDSMITH somewhere in substance observes that a city life emasculates the feelings. By frittering them away, he doubtless means, upon a great variety of objects. In the heart of this primitive wilderness this law is reversed, and the feelings intensify and grow stronger in the contemplation of the fewer and grander objects which Nature here presents to the view. These frowning hills, piled in dark and massive grandeur against the sky; the stars, glittering in eternal youth, and with

* Written among the Adirondack Mountains.

their beauty as fresh and undimmed as on the morning of creation; this placid lake, heaving its musical ripples to the shore, and reflecting back the smiles and the gladness of heaven; the deep and lonely gorges of the mountains; the solitudes of the original forest, hushed in unbreathing repose, or disturbed only by the wasted melodies of birds, or the gurgling flow of unnamed streams;—these compose here nearly all the objects that the eye can dwell upon, or that can minister to thought; but for the smallness of their number there is ample indemnity in this, that they all speak of God,—their Creator, and our indulgent Father.

*Books among the Mountains** — Up among the mountains a book is an impertinence. It comes between us and better thoughts. It interrupts the flow of a living poetry, a finer rhetoric, more endearing facts, within and without us. Milton's splendid hymn to morning itself — perhaps the loftiest utterance of human feeling yet spoken — is but an echo of what the

* Written after a walk to the summit of Mount Holyoke, on a beautiful morning in Autumn, while, as Tennyson writes,

“ — the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.”

full heart here feels as it looks abroad from a mountain-top at sunrise.

MUSIC.

MUSIC is the fourth great material want of our natures — first food, then raiment, then shelter, then music.

Music lends grace and dignity to life ; it softens care, alleviates regrets, refines and enlivens sensibility, links the ideal to the actual, and suggests a flow of life in unison with its harmonies.

Music is even medicinal. Effective to “cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart,” a recognition of this has led to its partial adoption in lunatic asylums as an element in the treatment of their unfortunate inmates, and it might even, with some advantage, be employed as an agent in the discipline of prisons.

English, Italian, and German Music — Much the same difference exists between the simple ballad music of England, Ireland, and Scotland,

and the more elaborate compositions of Italy and Germany, as exists between poetry and prose — the one addresses itself to the native, the other to the more refined and cultivated taste. Between the music of Italy and that of Germany, also, this distinction may be noted: Italian music, in great part, is the exponent of passion; German, of feeling or sentiment; and it is as passion or sentiment predominates in us, that we are led to give a preference to the one or other of these schools.

Musical Execution—Musical performers err when they aim more to surprise than to please; —to show off a certain technical adroitness and agility of the voice or fingers, rather than to ravish and delight the ear, and sway the sensibility. Only professionally is music a science of tricks of voice and sleights of hand.*

* Lovers of music may be divided into two classes: one that appreciates music according to its *quality*, and another that values it according to the *quantity* of it given. I am not sure that I do not in part belong to the latter class. At least, at concerts I like to get the worth of my money in grand crashes and

“Bursts sublime of instrumental harmony.”

Besides the enjoyment of listening, there is to me a lively

The Flute — No instrument harmonizes so well with certain states of feeling as the flute. Adapted to plaintive airs, and heard in the stillness of a summer evening,

“When all the air a solemn stillness holds,”

it stirs the heart to a gentle sadness, or awakens a tender melancholy in harmony with the hour and the scene.

The Piano — But, the piano is the most beautiful of instruments, not merely from the greater compass and variety of its music, but for a more important reason; its music is the music of our homes. To listen to an accomplished player, as he runs a master's hand over its keys, and scatters a spray of sweet sounds from his fingers' ends, is in itself an exquisite pleasure; but beyond this, the piano has a place in our regards which no other instrument can hold, from its being, as it were, the musical altar of the family circle, and the cherished companion of its best and happiest hours.

pleasure in seeing the greatest activity prevail in every department of an orchestra, as if the leader, a musical Nelson, had assumed for his signal, “The leader expects every man to do his duty.”

Street Organs—The common method for improving the popular taste in music in cities is through the establishment of philharmonic societies, but a more effectual mode of advancing the musical tastes of the poorer classes, would be through the formation of societies for the purchase and loaning out, on reasonable terms, to itinerant organists, of a class of instruments much superior to those now in use. The street organ has a touching claim to consideration, for it is the poor man's music—often almost his only music. It is one of the few golden threads woven into the common woof of his homelier pleasures—the sweetest of the few sweet influences that visit to grace, to sanctify, and to bless his home.





NEWSPAPERS.

NEWSPAPERS widen the sphere of our sympathies. They make their readers enter into the joys and sorrows of thousands of whom they would else know nothing, and for whom they would otherwise care nothing. But still, journalism is but in the initial stage of its development. As at present conducted, the world is not fairly represented by its newspapers. Life is something better than the journals make it out to be. They are too much the records of the crimes that curse, and the casualties that afflict it—the contests of litigants, and the strifes of politicians. Of the sweeter amenities of life the newspaper is far too silent. Therefore, newspapers should be read late in the day. To read the journals in the early morning, is to pollute the stream of the day at its source.

In unsettled periods, especially, newspapers

unsettle the grounds of our cheerfulness, from making the inward world of our thought and feeling to mirror the outer world of civil commotion, political troubles, or financial distress to which they refer. In such periods it is almost one of the conditions of cheerfulness to avoid reading too much the daily journals.

Newspaper Attacks—A public man may reasonably esteem it a piece of good fortune to be vigorously attacked in the newspapers. In the first place, it lifts him more prominently into notice. Then, a plausible defence will divide public opinion, while a triumphant vindication will more fully establish him in the popular regards. Even if unable to offer either, the notoriety so acquired will in time soften into a semblance of celebrity, so like its original that it will easily pass for it. Besides, the world is charitable, and will readily forgive old sins in consideration of later virtues.

Books and Newspapers—The office of a good newspaper is to represent well the interests of its time; that of a good book, to represent as wisely the interests of all time.



OBSERVERS.

HAD I my choice of the various conditions in life, I should much prefer, to all others, that of a quiet observer—to stand “a spectator of other men’s fortunes, and how they play their parts,” rather than to engage in the struggles, and participate in the passions, that mar the happiness, and sully the purity, of more active lives. “He who lives wisely to himself and his own heart,” says Hazlitt, in one of his finest passages, “looks at the busy world through the loop-holes of retreat, and does not want to mingle in the fray. ‘He hears the tumult, and is still.’ He is not able to mend it, nor willing to mar it. He sees enough in the universe to interest him without putting himself forward to try what he can do to fix the eyes of the universe upon him. Vain the attempt! He reads the clouds, he looks at the stars, he watches the returns of the seasons, the falling leaves of au-

tumn, the perfumed breath of spring, starts with delight at the sound of a thrush in a copse near him, sits by the fire, listens to the roaring of the wind, pores upon a book, or discourses the freezing hours away, or melts down hours into minutes in pleasing thought. All this while he is taken up with other things, forgetting himself."

The conditions of superiority in every field of observation are easily distinguishable, and arise out of a disposition to observe with a particular and thoughtful, instead of a merely general and unreflecting, interest. This is evident from the adjectives we employ to designate the character of an observer. We say of him that he is a close, severe, vigilant observer; a nice, careful, discriminating critic; a watchful and a thoughtful spectator. These are all qualities eminently susceptible of cultivation. Indeed, the faculty of observing is one that admits of development more than any other, and there is also an infinite variety of objects on which it may be exercised. "I can wonder at nothing more," says Bishop Hall, "than how a man can be idle. How numberless are the

books which men have written of arts, of tongues! How endless is that volume which God hath written of the world; where every creature is a letter, every day a new page!"

OCCUPATION.

MIND unemployed is mind unenjoyed.

OFFENCES.

IT is needless to have so much care about giving offence: it is inevitable that the good should give offence to the bad, and the bad to the good.

OPINIONS.

OUR opinions partake, more or less, of the prejudices of our class, party, or sect. We are all largely pledged, through interest, affection,* or passion, to particular classes of opinion,

* For instance, we readily accredit what it is pleasant for us to believe. One night my wife dreamed that an angel fluttered down from heaven, and took our then sick infant and ascended with it. A few days after the child—"our little Mary"—died. Under the circumstances, not to feel,

and the strength of our efforts to get released from these pledges, is the measure of our advancement.

Opinions, again, are according to character, to insight, to antecedents, or to caprice. A mean man will have mean opinions. A generous man's views will partake of the generosity of his character. And, where there is a want of character, opinions are the result of levity, rather than of reflection. Of four persons who attended a lecture of Ralph Waldo Emerson, one listened for twenty minutes, and then made off, after whispering, "My time is too precious to waste it in listening to such stuff as that." Another, at its close, broke away from his friends, that the impression it made upon him might not be dissipated by their less elevated discourse. "My mind," he afterwards said, "was so filled with the beauty of that lecture, that I wanted to enjoy, without interruption, the thoughts it suggested." A third, as the audience was leaving, turned to a companion and whispered, "Tell me, what has that gentleman what it was so grateful to believe, that there was a connection — something more than a merely fanciful one — between the dream and the event, was scarcely possible.

been trying to say?" The fourth was so charmed with the discourse that he wished, he said, that it might be printed in letters of gold, and a copy of it presented to every man and woman in the country.

We should express our opinions as merchants make out their accounts, "errors excepted."

Influence of Public Opinion upon Private Morals — Public opinion makes private manners. It will not do for us to fancy ourselves paragons of perfection, because our habits chance to be unexceptionable. We get, we scarcely know how, into a certain exemplary routine, and keep to it, as we fancy, from choice, but in truth more from force of surrounding opinion. Let us be drawn aside from this ; let us wander into new scenes, and lo ! the saint at home becomes the sinner abroad, and with the traveller's pleasures is mingled the traveller's license.

Theological Opinions — There exists no reason why our theological opinions should not be like our other opinions, progressive, varying with an increasing knowledge, and advancing

with our general development. The world has been too long ridden, as by a nightmare, by the notion that we must fit our minds to this or that theological Procrustean bed; that we must cast our religious beliefs, like iron, in certain fixed and unalterable forms.

OPTIMISTS.

ONLY he is truly blest who is truly an optimist. Follies give him less concern who knows how to excuse them; and evils trouble him not so much who holds to the elevated doctrine that evil itself is but "good misunderstood."

The Optimist as Critic—Admirable as he is in so many other things, the optimist is especially admirable as a critic. In him the usual critical spirit of fault-finding is wanting. He invites his readers to accompany him, not as a member of the detective police of literature, armed with the terrors of critical law, to arrest and to hand over to punishment transgressors against the principles of taste, but as a generous patron of art, in a search for kindred excellence,

and to distribute to those who have merited them, the prizes of genial sympathy and discriminating applause.

The Optimist as Religious Teacher—But, it is in his character of religious teacher that the optimist claims our highest admiration. Clerical cynics are constantly telling us how bad we are—seeking thereby to exalt the Deity by disparaging the noblest of his creatures, and to inspire us with faith in Him, by divesting us of all faith in ourselves. Quite different from this is the method of the optimist. He aims to exalt our conceptions of the Great Father by deepening in us a sense of his goodness. Selecting Leigh Hunt as a representative of this noble school of optimist teachers—What a beautiful book is his “Religion of the Heart!” Interesting as an attempt to inaugurate a formalized system of natural religion, it is also replete with the finest wisdom, enforced with the tenderest feeling, and with all that sweetness and benignity that were so peculiarly traits of his gentle and elevated character.

ORDER.

LET a man restore order within himself, and chaos without ceases.

ORGANIZATIONS.

ORGANIZATIONS are more for weak men, who are little individually, but collectively of some importance. Strong men have less need of them, except to rule in them. They are themselves organizations.

Church Organizations—The interior working of churches seems to be not unlike that of other organizations. It is not always the best man in them that has the most influence, but he that is the most active, and in whom the *esprit de corps* rises highest. A glance into any congregation may reveal the presence of a great man, the patron of its minister, and the Sir Oracle of its business meetings, who swells with the pride of humility, and feels that the cause of Providence is in his especial keeping.

OWNERSHIP.

OWNERSHIP is of three kinds: actual, legal, and transcendental. The *actual* ownership of things depends on their relation to us. The warmth of another man's fire is as much mine as his while we are both enjoying it, and much more mine than his while he is freezing at a distance. *Legal* ownership, while it insures independence in given particulars, diminishes it materially in others. The necessity of looking after one's property in a considerable measure lessens its value. He belongs to his land who has the fee-simple of it. He owes it certain duties, which must, under penalty, be performed. Much of his time, perhaps, is absorbed in small details of management, and his freedom of mind and of action is necessarily more or less controlled. Indeed, as the poet Dana once observed, "Material property in nature almost dispossesses one of his old poetical estate in her." *Transcendental* ownership relates to the property of the soul. The wealth of the universe may be his who has not a material claim to a foot of it. The eye has a property in all it sees. The stars are a part of our pos-

sessions, for they shine for us ; the sun and the moon, too, for they gild our days and illuminate our nights. These and all things else in nature are ours, for they exist for us, and are the ministers to our enjoyment.





PARTIES.

VERY often a cause is brought more into discredit or repute through the character and acts of its leaders, than through any demerit or claims to acceptance it may have in itself. "Principles, not men," is an abstraction. It may commend itself to the wise, but the many are "not wise, but otherwise." With these, it is less the doctrines of a party, than the real or fancied qualities of its leaders, that determines an adherence or opposition to it.

Partisanship — It is mostly the unthinking that range themselves into parties, and give themselves up to the spirit of partisanship. The more reflecting stand aloof, and do not so clearly see the necessity of becoming Guelphs or Ghibellines, Papists or Puritans. But to this rule there are numerous exceptions. There is indeed an order of able minds that never attain

to a philosophic impartiality in the judgment of any subject having two sides. There is something partisan even in their intellects. Their point of view is always from their own side. Their religion is bigotry ; their criticism, denunciation ; their politics, blind adherence to faction. They are like vessels that sail badly from having too much ballast on one side.

Party Schisms — Schisms in parties are frequently in the first instance but quarrels between the leaders thereof—the principles upon which it is pretended they turn being introduced to destroy the odor of personality, and to give respectability to the contest.

Party Strifes — The strifes of parties turn usually upon no higher consideration than a desire to pull down one set of men, of whom we know little, to put in their places certain other men, of whom we know less. And then, as Bacon tells us, “When one of two factions is extinguished, the remaining subdivideth.”

PASSION.

IT is difficult to say which is the greatest evil—to have too violent passions, or to be wholly devoid of them. Controlled with firmness, guided by discretion, and hallowed by the imagination, the passions are the vivifiers and quickeners of our being. Without passion there can be no energy of character. Indeed, the passions are like fire, useful in a thousand ways, and dangerous only in one—through their excess.

As hot blood feels no blows, and heeds no lessons, so passion looks not beyond the moment of its existence. Better, it holds, the kisses of love to-day, than the felicities of heaven afar off.

To repress an immoderate passion, its gratification must be made impossible. Slight impediments, as Lord Kames observes, only add to its force. A parent, for instance, who wishes his daughter not to marry an unworthy object of her affections, must send her to such a distance as to make any intercourse with her lover im-

practicable. To merely enjoin her to drop her passion, would be only to induce a conflict between duty and affection, in which the latter would be almost certain to carry the day.

Before and after Passion — The most sensible views of an object of passion are taken after it has been gratified. For this reason, perhaps, ardent inquirers sometimes yield to their passions in order to study them. But the passions are best studied objectively, not subjectively.

Slumbering Passions — There are seasons when our passions have slept so long that we know not whether they still exist in us. So does flax forget that it is combustible when the fire is away from it.

PHILOSOPHY.

A CHEERFUL philosophy is the only one worth having. I doubt always the soundness of his philosophy who is not made more cheerful by it. The best definition of philosophy I know of is that of Victor Cousin, in his treatise on the "Philosophy of the Beautiful."

“What is philosophy?” he asks. “It is something that lightens up, that makes bright.”

The Philosopher's Relation to Society — He can best see what is going on in a crowd, who stands a little out of and above it. This is the philosopher's stand-point. A spectator, rather than a sharer, of the passions that agitate it, he sees into the causes which originate, and the laws that control its excitements, all the more clearly that he keeps himself, in a certain measure, aloof from them.

Philosophy and Religion — The office of philosophy — “mother severe of infinite delights” — is to make men more contented with the present; that of religion, to assure them of happiness in the future; and all departures from these functions are perversions of their legitimate uses.

Philosophers as Speakers — Philosophers make poor speakers. As they form, so they express their views, without heat or passion: but it is just this passion that lends interest to speech.

PHYSICIANS.

PHYSICIANS do not discharge their whole duty to society, or wield, to the fullest extent, the influence they might exert for its benefit. They should take higher ground in their professional practice, and become the legislators of our habits, prescribing these, and excepting to those, as injurious to health. They should say to one, for instance, speaking with the emphasis which attaches to the opinions of established intelligence, "Sir, you are killing yourself with smoking.* You must sacrifice the habit, or it

* "He who doth not smoke," says Bulwer, "hath either known no great griefs, or refuseth himself the softest consolation, next to that which comes from heaven." Accepting this as a poetical statement of smoking as a luxury, it is still my conviction that excessive smoking is productive of as much injury to health as almost any other form of intemperance. Upon this subject I speak authoritatively, being myself an old smoker, and for many years incorrigible and past cure. I am a smoker like the Germans, according to Calvert. "The Germans," says he, after visiting one of their public saloons, in which the smoke was so thick that he could scarcely see to the other side of the room—"The Germans do not smoke; they are smoked. Tobacco has got the upper hand of them." One effect of their habit of smoking to excess has been to make the Germans largely an impracticable people. A nation of dreamers, smoking has largely contributed to make them so. As for the kindred practice of chewing tobacco, it is even more objectionable. Indeed, the use of tobacco in any inordinate degree is inconsistent

will sacrifice you ;” — and to another, “ My dear sir, your business is lucrative, but it is not fitted for your health, and you must give it up or forego all hope of a long life.” In some such way, I believe, was Abernethy accustomed to practise ; and, despite of his uncompromising manners, few men of his profession stood in higher estimation in his time. He did not wait for disease to develop itself before attacking it, but he seized upon and strangled the monster while it yet lay sleeping in the cradle of a pernicious habit, or lurked in the germ of a growing appetite. In a degree, he lifted his great office to a guardianship of health. Wise by special culture, and capable of treating established diseases with sagacity, physicians should also re-

with a proper cleanliness ; it affects the breath, soils the teeth, gives a bilious tinge to the complexion, deranges the nerves, reduces vitality, impairs the sensibility to beauty and to pleasure, abets other tendencies to intemperance, promotes idleness, and degrades the man. In its aggregate effects it is even among the most efficient of causes operating to retard the progress of humanity. I would not be thought an extremist, but I really believe that the strong language of Dr. Draper, in speaking upon this subject, is scarcely overcharged. “ The white man,” he in effect observes, “ has despoiled the red man of his fields and his forests ; but the red man has had his revenge : he has left to the white man his curse — the curse of tobacco.”

gard it as a part of their functions to indicate and warn against the tendencies leading to them.*

PHYSIOGNOMY.

THERE is no art," says Shakspeare, "whereby to find the mind's construction in the face;" and Lavater's idea of a science of physiognomy, with its fixed principles and invariable results, deserves only to be considered as the pleasant dream of a generous enthusiast. Physiognomy is a study chiefly interesting as a puzzle, seldom valuable for its results. As in phrenology, certain of its principles are plausible, and others have an undoubted basis in truth, but still the fact remains—the scope of an intellect is not to be measured with a tape-string, or a character deciphered from the shape or length of a nose. Even the question of big head and little head is still unsettled. It has been long before the world, and would, it may be said,

* Since these remarks were written, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes has observed, substantially to the same purport, "Causes, causes, and again causes; more and more physicians must fall back on these as the chief objects of their attention." "The one prevalent failing of the medical art," he says again, "is to neglect causes and quarrel with effects."

have been decided long ago, if there was anything in it. We are accustomed, it is true, in common parlance, to speak of men noted for their sagacity as long-headed fellows, but in this we speak figuratively. Upon Napoleon's theory that a long nose indicates a long reach of sagacity, we might, with the same propriety that we speak of long-headed fellows, speak of long-nosed fellows. Seriously, besides the difficulty of reading the character, and following the motions of the soul, through a substance so little transparent as that of the face, but few of the faces we meet with can be said to be of Nature's moulding;—conventional usage, and the necessities of society—the having to look interest where none is felt—to smile a welcome where we would rather wave an adieu—so far modifying the countenance that but little of its original character is left. “God gave us one face, and we have made unto ourselves many.”

PLACES.

WE are a part of the place we are in, and in a degree, our spirits are subdued or

elevated to the tone of our surroundings. One is wiser in his library than in the street, and in the woods and fields than in either.

PLEASURE.

PLEASURE and pain spring not so much from the nature of things, as from our manner of considering them. Pleasure, especially, is never an invariable effect of particular circumstances. Largely, that is pleasure which is thought to be so.

Pleasures of Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age—The pleasures of children are principally those of the senses, while manhood's are those, with those of the æsthetic and more ecstatic sort added to them. Youth, too, is too tumultuous for felicity; old age too insecure for happiness. The period most favorable to enjoyment, in a vigorous, fortunate, and generous life, is that between forty and sixty. Life culminates at sixty.

Fireside Pleasures—The best of life is around the fireside. With the better affections within

us, and the sweets of domestic life around us, we have no need to sigh for heaven. We have it already.

Forbidden Pleasures — Much of the pleasure in life comes from its sins. But who needs to be told of the pains and the penalties that follow! We first toy with the ideas of inhibited things, not proposing at all to indulge in them. Oh, no! There can be no harm, we think, in dallying with the fancy of what the taste must be of forbidden fruits.

“To nurse the image of unfelt caresses,
Till dim imagination just possesses
The half-created shadow.”

Who looks not upon beauty with an eye of love? The glance of admiration is returned with one of interest; the interest deepens; “eyes look love to eyes that speak again;” we take the half-reluctant hand and press it; timidly, and half unconsciously, the pressure is returned; we plead for but one kiss, but that is a long and burning one; we ask but to fold in a momentary embrace, but in the intoxication and delirium of that moment, the gates of

heaven and of hell have opened and closed upon us.

“Most wretched man,
That to affections does the bridle lend;
In their beginning they are weak and wan,
But soon, through suff’rance, grow to fearful end.”*

Pleasures of Hope—Pleasures are like flowers; they are constantly springing up—except in winter, and even then they may be made to grow.

Pleasures of Memory and of the Imagination—When we get tired of enjoying all the pleasures within our reach, we have still a resource in thinking of others that are not.

Natural Pleasures—They that depend upon nature for their pleasures never become *blasés*. The resources of art and society are limited; those of nature inexhaustible. How infinite in number the pictures alone that nature, out of a few materials, and their varied combination, incessantly presents to the charmed senses!

“Better far for man,
Were he and nature more familiar friends!
His part is worse that touches the base world.

* Spenser.

Altho' the ocean's inmost heart be pure,
Yet the salt fringe that daily licks the shore
Is gross with sand."*

Simple Pleasures—The simplest pleasures are the best. And, enjoyment is to be found in things familiar and at hand, rather than in things rare, costly, or remote. "The common," says Sir Walter Scott, "is commonly the best."

Pleasures that give us the greatest Pleasure—The sweetest pleasures come from imparting them. A pleasant consideration this—that the things that give us the greatest pleasure are those which do us the greatest honor.

Tranquil Pleasures—Tranquil pleasures last the longest. We are not fitted to bear long the burden of great joys.

POETS AND POETRY.

THE poet's is the highest type of character :
Other men dwell in the conventional—he
chiefly abides in the universal.†

* Alexander Smith.

† Not always, however. Even poetry has its conventionalisms. Ploughmen, for instance, like the winds, when they

Poetry—"the voice of the soul," as Hallam finely calls it—is the disclosure of the real but half-hidden import, the subtler sense and spirit of things, and not, as the unimaginative, to whom poetry is as "a sealed book," are apt to consider it, the artificial expression of artificial thoughts and feelings.

Poets as Friends —

"Methinks all poets should be gentle, fair,
And ever young, and ever beautiful.
I'd have all poets to be like to this, —
Gold-haired and rosy-lipped, to sing of Love,"

says the author of the "Life Drama." But, we must accept facts as we find them. Poets are not so poetical—outside of their verses. I would even rather read the poets than live with them. I would not wilfully misrepresent that class whose high calling it is to keep alive in the world the worship of the beautiful and the good, but the records of their lives show that

make their appearance in poetry, are always whistling. The picture of one in *L'Allegro*,

"While the ploughman near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,"

may very well stand, so faithful is his resemblance to his brethren in this respect, for the whole class.

they are not always firm friends or agreeable companions. Passing so much of their time in the "life ideal," the "life actual" appears to them by contrast dull, tame, and prosaic, and their imaginings of what men ought to be, make them disgusted with men as they are.

Happiness of Poets — The spiritual existences of poets must be more stormy than those of other men, as they must feel and be moved by the passions they describe. Indeed, poets are little to be envied on the score of any greater enjoyment derived from their superior endowments. Though endued more plenteously with heavenly grace than other men, they are made to feel, from the necessities of their calling, far more painfully the need of it. Gifted by nature with a sensibility too acute for the more tranquil enjoyments of ordinary minds, this sensibility, already too great for the purposes of happiness, is necessarily, in the pursuit of their object, still further increased by art and culture. The poet's business is to sell his feelings to the public for as much as he can get for them in praise and pudding. Unfortunately for his hap-

piness, the value of these feelings depends upon their intensity, and knowing this, he is incited to sink a deeper well of sensibility in himself.

Poets' Ideals—To the reproach of poets it may be said, that they do not always present to us the highest ideals. As one of their number* has said of them—

“If reason be nobility in man,
Can aught be more ignoble than the man
Whom they delight in, blinded as he is
By prejudice, the miserable slave
Of low ambition, or distempered love?”

Carlyle, also, has a few suggestive words upon this subject of the poet's infidelity to his highest office. “Alas,” he says, “when sacred priests are arguing about ‘black and white surplices’; and sacred poets have long professedly deserted Truth, and gone to wool-gathering after ‘ideals’ and such like!” Somewhat to the same effect are these lines of Lowell—

“In the old days of awe, and keen-eyed wonder,
The poet's song with blood-warm truth was rife;
* * * * * *

* Wordsworth.

"He could believe the promise of to-morrow,
And feel the wondrous meaning of to-day ;

* * * * *

"But now the poet is an empty rhymers
Who lies with idle elbow on the grass,
And fits his singing, like a cunning timer,
To all men's pride and fancies as they pass."

Lachrymose Poetry — For the lachrymose school of poetry—the school of the lugubrious Dr. Young, the despairing Lord Byron, the tearful Mrs. Hemans, the love-sick, sentimental, and disconsolate Miss Landon, and others of the whining tribe—plaintive as bleating sheep—I have little respect. These poetical Paganinis, playing upon their one string of sorrow, are to me as monotonous in their whining as the droning of a bagpipe, an instrument which it is highly interesting to hear—once in a lifetime. What I object to is, not the poetry of sadness, but the sadness of poetry. Many of the poets make out the fountain of poetry to be only a fountain of tears. "Tell me," says M. Housaye—"tell me, what do our sad geniuses sing to their fair ones? Is it love, beauty, grace, youth? They sing, that is to say, they bewail over, the bitterness of life; they weep for their vanished illusions; they groan over the rough

road of life ; in fine, instead of singing of love, it may be said they sing of death. . . . You might, here and there, see a tolerably pretty blue eye, if a tear did not rise to moisten it, but this tear which veils the blue eye is poetry."

Youth and Poetry—It is a mistake to suppose that Nature has appointed youth as the peculiar season of poetical sensibility. It is so only to those who plunge into business as into a sea, and become intellectually drowned in it. With these Fancy folds her wings, and the imagination droops like a sick bird. But, that this is not a necessity, is clear from the circumstance that nearly all the world's standard poetry has been written in mature years. Nor is it in harmony with Nature's highest law—the law of progressive development. Under this, life, like the westering sun, should grow more and more resplendent to its close.

POLITENESS.

THE perfection of politeness is to be able to pull a man's nose without giving him offence.

It is possible to be too polite to be acceptably so. Civil to all, true to none. The over-polite profess too much for us to believe them. Their courtesies are so elaborate, and they take so much trouble to be kind, that we suspect them to have a design in it, or that they are making themselves agreeable more on their own account than on ours.

POLITICS.

OUT of politics comes more uproar than progress. It is indeed surprising how little, comparatively, this noisy department of human affairs contributes to the world's prosperity. Political commotions upon the grandest scale, political events of astounding suddenness, political characters of the greatest ability, abound, but still, permanent results are rare, and we look in vain for a measure of public good corresponding in extent to the hideous rout which ushers it in. Progress but turns upon its pillow, and goes to sleep again.

But this, it may be, is only a Quietist's view of the subject. Another, more rational, may be,

that the sword can only be fashioned amid the clank of hammers and the ring of anvils—that clamor is an accompaniment of movement—that, indeed, the noise of politics is the noise of progress—of progress through antagonisms.

Political Compromises—Much of the embarrassment in the way of wise political action arises from the difficulty of reconciling particular with general interests. Thus, local interests ask protection; the general interest is anti-tariff.* Applicable to all such antagonisms is this general principle: Whenever two interests come into conflict, the lesser interest must succumb to the greater, in the degree of its inferior

* The first free-trader (in the modern sense of the word—pirates were formerly called free-traders) was, strange to say, a Russian barbarian, and a czar at that. When the Czar Theodore, towards the close of the sixteenth century, assumed the reins of sovereign power, he revoked the patent which had been granted by his father to the English for the monopoly of the Russian trade, and when remonstrated with by Queen Elizabeth, he replied, that “princes must carry an indifferent hand as well between their subjects as between foreigners; and not convert trade, which, by the law of nations, ought to be common to all, into a monopoly for the private gain of a few.” “So much juster notions of commerce,” wisely says Hume, after relating the circumstance, “were entertained by the barbarian than appear in the conduct of the renowned Queen Elizabeth.”

importance. But otherwise where vital principles are involved. Interests, not principles, are the proper subjects of compromise.

Foreign Policies — The best foreign policy that a government can adopt is to eschew foreign policies as much as possible. To indicate the evil of these foreign policies, it is sufficient to say, that nearly all the wars that have desolated the earth have sprung from them.

Political Honors — In politics merit is rewarded by the possessor being raised, like a target, to a position to be fired at. Or, the fate of a popular aspirant is often like that of a prize ox. When in his best condition he is put up for exhibition, decorated with flowers and ribbons, and afterwards led out to be slaughtered.

Political Oppressions — All men, not themselves oppressors, or demoralized by tyranny, are united in their hatred of political oppressions, but divided as to the means, or the practicability, of successfully resisting them. For the present, it is enough that the inclination to resistance exists: by and by, in a happier and

more advanced stage, to this inclination will be added, what is now wanting, a knowledge of, and a reliance upon, the agencies for their overthrow.

Professional Politicians—Politicians seek their private advancement through professions of devotion to public interests. In a democratic state, politicians are the old class of courtiers under new conditions: instead of to the sovereign, they pay their court to the people. Let the people beware of them!

Political aspirants make too much of the people before election, and, if successful, too much of themselves after it. They use the people when they want to rise, as we treat a spirited horse when we want to mount him;—for a time we pat the animal upon the neck, and speak him softly; but once in the saddle, then come the whip and spur.

Professional politicians are about the last men from whom selections for offices should be made, since they are apt to regard them, not so much as trusts confided, as rewards for services ren-

dered — thus mistaking the tenure by which offices are to be held, which is, not that honor and benefit may be done to the holders alone, but far more to the constituencies they represent.*

Political Troubles — There are times when the political, like the natural sky, is clouded, but to a good purpose — this giving promise of the wished-for rain that a protracted drought has rendered indispensable to vegetation; that affording a prospect that evils, long but reluctantly submitted to, are about to be swept away.†

* "I do not wonder," says Burke, "that the behavior of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue somewhat out of humor with all sorts of connection in politics. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies, a narrow, bigoted, and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest." But, he afterwards adds, "Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connections in politics; essentially necessary for the full performance of our public duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction."

† Humanity shrinks with horror from the evil of civil war, but, as a friend has suggested, among the greatest blessings of civilization have been civil wars. Americans owe their

POPULARITY.

A POPULAR idol is usually made up of qualities common to his time. If superior to the ideas of his period he would disregard them, and in disregarding them he would forfeit all chance of popularity. Thus, a popular preacher is ordinarily no more than the organ of the prejudices of his sect, intensified in their expression through an uncommonly ardent, and perhaps generous, character. Indeed, Lamartine makes substantially the same observation. "The greatness of a popular character," he says, "is less according to the ratio of his genius than the sympathy he shows with the prejudices and even the absurdities of his time. Fanatics do not select the cleverest, but the most fanatical leaders; as was evidenced in the choice of Robespierre by the French Jacobins, and in that of Cromwell by the English Puritans."

freedom to three great civil wars — the civil war of Cromwell's time, that which dethroned James the Second, and the civil war of their own Revolution. Unhappily, while their ancestors conquered freedom for themselves, they denied it to the negro, and hence their present civil war, more formidable in its proportions, more momentous in its issues, and grander in its promises.

POSSIBILITIES.

WE repose too much upon the actual, when we should be seeking to develop the possibilities of our being. It is true of nearly all of us, that what we have done is little compared with what we might have accomplished, or may hereafter effect.

A thing is possible or impossible according to the nature that undertakes it. "Why, sir, this is impossible," exclaims one to the projector of a difficult enterprise. "To you it would be," is the curt but appropriate reply.

POVERTY.

WE should not so much esteem our poverty as a misfortune, were it not that the world treats it so much as a crime.

Doubtless, the best way to make our poverty respected is not to regard it so much as an evil. It was a noble trait in the character of Béranger, that he was never ashamed to be poor, nor to frankly confess his poverty. "My

poverty," he once wrote, "was never an embarrassment to me, for it never cost me anything to say, 'I am poor.' This frankness almost supplies the place of fortune, because it permits you to exercise all the economies; it conciliates in your favor many women, and, as a consequence, the *salons*, which, in this respect, have been calumniated. Do not permit your poverty," he wisely adds, "to be a constraint upon others. Laugh at the fitting time, and the world will indulge your pride without wounding it."

In one important respect a man is fortunate in being poor. His responsibility to God is so much the less.

POWER.

THE most coveted of all things is power. We know this to be true of men, and we have the authority of Chaucer for adopting a like theory as regards the softer sex. Witness his story of the Wife of Bath: —

"Some saiden, women love best richesse,
Some saiden honour, some saiden jollinesse,

Some riche array, some saiden lust abed,
And oft time to be widewe and to be wedde,
Some saiden, that we ben in herte most esed,
When that we ben yflattered and ypraised.
He got full nigh the truth, I will not lie;
A man shall win us best with flatterie,
And with attention, and with besinesse.
* * * * *
Women desiren to have soveraintie,
As well over hir husband as hir love,
And for to ben in maistrie him above."

History incessantly repeats the warning to confer only a limited degree of power. The abuse of power is, has been, and perhaps always will be, the chief source of social and political evils. Most of the wars between states, as well as the misfortunes of individuals, arise from the presumption of privileged personages, elevated to a real or fancied superiority to law, and above ordinary restraints. Especially, every addition to exorbitant authority should be accompanied by increased safeguards against its undue exercise.

At every great increase in power, the props which support it require to be strengthened. Our fortunes have need to grow like trees —

the broader they spread their branches, the deeper and wider they must strike their roots. Or, as Dryden says —

“High turrets, in their airy sweep,
Require foundations in proportions deep.”

PRAISE.

THE best evidence of merit is a cordial recognition of it, whenever and wherever it may be found.

Worth should be thrice rewarded ; in itself, in the good will and kind offices it conciliates, and in the admiration and applause it commands.

It is pleasanter to praise than to condemn, and they who look wisely to their happiness will endeavor, as they go through life, to see as many things to praise, and as few to condemn, as possible. We overlook too much degrees of merit, and give too exclusive an admiration to the highest.

Perhaps there are few who cannot discover, on looking back over their past lives, wherein

a little more praise on some occasions, and a little less on others, would have materially altered, if not entirely changed, the tenor of their fortunes.

Merit is prone to doubt itself, and needs encouragement from without — the occasional word of applause to confirm the half-formed purpose into the fixed design. A kiss from his mother, West said, made him a painter.

Even in our highest, most laudable, and most arduous undertakings, we act under the stimulus of past, the inspiration of present, and the hope of future praise.

Praise of what we have done is encouragement for what we have still to do.

Praise a generally foolish person for an act of discretion upon any particular occasion, and he will grow to be a wise one, if that is possible, that he may earn more of it.

And yet, we speak our praises in whispers, like men afraid to be overheard, but censure

boldly, and in the assured style of judges of courts of last resort, whose decisions there are none to overrule. Better than this;—praise should not fall short of doing full justice to its subject. It should be discriminating, and not stinted, like that of the Englishman who pronounced Niagara “Very neat, sir. Upon my word, a very neat affair.”

No one was probably ever injured by having his good qualities made the subject of judicious praise. The virtues, like plants, reward the attention bestowed upon them by growing more and more thrifty. A lad who is often told that he is a good boy, will in time grow ashamed to exhibit the qualities of a bad one. Words of praise, indeed, are almost as necessary to warm a child into a genial life as acts of kindness and affection. Judicious praise is to children what the sun is to flowers.

It is a grave insincerity to affect to dislike praise. We are all naturally fond of applause. My feeling is, that it is only the flatterer who does justice to the undeveloped possibilities within us. Accord is the basis of concord. We agree

with him who extols us. We accept without cavil conclusions that do us honor. The flatterer is our best friend. "If a good reputation is a reward, it is also a curb; when people give us a good name, they most frequently oblige us to deserve it," says Emile Souvestre. Of hearty, robust praise there is far too little in the world. The best side of a character is developed towards him who commends it, as grapes grow sweetest on the side of the cluster that faces the sun.

PRAYERS.

AS pity is for the unfortunate, so prayers are appropriate chiefly for the erring. The good do not need them. They do not need a feeble intercession who have already God on their side.

PREJUDICE.

THE great obstacle to progress is prejudice.

Errors entrenched in prejudice offer a far more protracted resistance, and are far more difficult to be expelled, than when they occupy

or seek the support of the understanding. The lesser reason yields to the stronger, but prejudice stands aloof from reason, and asks nothing from and will yield nothing to it.

Even when we fancy we have grown wiser, it is only, it may be, that new prejudices have displaced old ones.

National prejudices are founded on individual ignorance. The less an Englishman knows of France, for instance, the greater is his contempt for Frenchmen.

PRIDE.

PRIDE is like the beautiful acacia, that lifts its head proudly above its neighbor plants — forgetting that it too, like them, has its roots in the dirt.

To great force of character there is often added a greater pride that impairs its influence. This offends more than the other pleasures.

It is a characteristic of the inferior pride of inferior men to look back to, and to waste time

in dwelling upon, past triumphs—while it is no less true, that the higher pride which is the stimulus to nobler undertakings, and the best guarantee of success in them, is ever looking forward to future successes. A manly pride rests, not so much upon what we are, have been, or have accomplished, as upon what we hope to be, or propose to accomplish.

In most of our misfortunes it is our pride which suffers more than our interest.

PRIESTCRAFT.

THERE are two things in which priestcraft in every country unites—in praying for us, and in preying upon us.

There is indeed no influence in society more dangerous to its interests than that of priestcraft. The more accomplished its agents, the more dangerous. Their very accomplishments dignify and lend force to an influence always to be carefully guarded against.

Priestcraft has so filled the world with its

monstrous inventions, and its no less monstrous constructions, that to reach religious truth through what it has superadded upon it, is as difficult as to conjecture the form of a fine lady under her hoops. "In natural religion," says Bolingbroke, "priests are unnecessary; in revealed, they are dangerous guides."

Priests and Lawyers — Priests and lawyers are intermeddlers by profession. The first stand between man and his God; the last between nature and man. Law is limitation, as well as regulation. Theology is a circumscription of the divine.

Priests, Lawyers, and Physicians — We intrust to the priests the care of our souls, to the doctors the care of our bodies, and to the lawyers the care of our fortunes — all three, as often happens, disappearing under their guardianship.

PRINCIPLES.

PRINCIPLES we apprehend readily enough, but the consequences depending upon their adoption or rejection, not so readily.

In very truth, principles are not sufficiently regarded as having the power they possess to carry us successfully through life, but are mistakenly considered as a burden, that cannot fail, if assumed, to retard our progress, and compromise our success—as a sort of Old Man of the Sea, that, once taken up, must be carried along by us ever after with infinite toil and fatigue.

Compromises of Principle — The recognition of a principle as sound involves the responsibility of living up to it. Indeed, every concession of a vital principle to any exigency, however urgent, is a calamity. Let the right prevail. It is better that ten times ten thousand men should suffer in their interests than that a right principle should not be vindicated. Granting that all these will be injured by the suppression of the false, an infinitely greater number will as certainly be prejudiced by throwing off the allegiance due to truth. Throughout the future all have an interest in the establishment of sound principles, while only a few, comparatively, in the present, can have even a seeming interest in the conservation of error.

Principles and their Embodiment — To perceive the truth of principles which have not as yet met with general acceptance is not so very difficult, for this is only to be wiser than the rest of the world ; but to live up to these principles — herein is the main difficulty, for this is to be both wiser and better than the world at large.

First Principles — What we somewhat presumptuously call first principles are only principles secondary and incidental to other principles unknown to us. "We know something," says Pascal, "of the middle of things, but of their beginning and end we know nothing."

PRIVILEGED ORDERS.

PRIVILEGED orders — persons of rank and in authority — may safely be considered as the friends of the people only so far as is consistent with the preservation of their rank, and the maintenance of their privileges. It is out of the usual course of things for any class of men to be hostile to a state of affairs from which they derive all their consequence. "The king,"

said a candid Swedish sovereign, "who affects to be an enthusiast for liberty, is a hypocrite."

PROBABILITIES.

THE wise build their doctrines—theological and philosophical—upon a basis of probabilities, never upon the foundation of absolute certainty.

THE PROFESSIONS.

THE law makes cunning men,* divinity conservative men, politics scheming men, com-

* The lawyer's relation to society is like that of the scarecrow to the corn-field: assume that he accomplishes no positive good—still he exerts a wholesome influence from the terror his presence inspires.

Seriously: The habits of lawyers are as correct, and their standards of action as high, as those of any other body, with the single exception, perhaps, of the clergy. But, like the clergy, they are parts and partisans of a system—the interested advocates of forms and establishments as they exist. The interests of their order warp them to conservatism.

Again: The sagacity of lawyers is principally exerted to construe the law; not so much to improve it. If this had been different, and but a small portion of the acuteness they are accustomed to display had been turned in the direction of higher objects, it is incredible that such abuses as the court of chancery, the law authorizing the imprisonment of debtors, and the disqualification of witnesses for interest, could

merce grasping men, manufactures ingenious men, the fine arts tasteful men, the press influential men, physic dangerous men, and agriculture useful men.

PROGRESS.

SCARCELY, it is probable, has a knowledge of their highest powers yet dawned on men. In the noblest characters of the past, we may see an anticipation of the average men of the future. As in physics all things tend to unity, so with men, I believe, all things tend to ultimate good.

Beyond equipping him for the ordinary experiences of life, nature gives to each man a reserve of power, first, for extraordinary exigencies, and next, as means to more advanced conditions.

have existed for so long a period to "fright the souls of fearful adversaries."

And finally: Perhaps a gradual revolution in public sentiment—like that which is already taking place elsewhere, and which, among other things, from holding it degrading to labor, is beginning to hold it shameful to live without employment—will ultimately abolish, indirectly and by degrees, the legal profession, as tending too much to promote contention.

Besides this, there is a natural progress of things, which carries us forward whether we are active or passive. Overlooking this silent procession of unseen influences, a certain class attach themselves to a cause, like barnacles to a ship, and fancy they are moving when they are only carried along.

Indeed, the grandest of all laws is the law of progressive development. Under it, in the wide sweep of things, men grow wiser as they grow older; societies better.

At present society is composed, not so much of men and women, as of the raw material of men and women, which it will be the office of a higher civilization to work up into the forms of a truer manhood and womanhood.

Essentials to Progress — Progress — “the stride of God,” as Victor Hugo called it — is dependent chiefly upon two conditions — the dropping of old ideas — old methods of thought and action — and the adoption of new and better. We see this illustrated in penmanship. One of the most difficult things is to improve

the handwriting. Earnestly desirous of improvement, and laboring sedulously to that end, we still find, after a long interval, that we have after all made little or no progress. Upon referring to what we have written during this period, we discover some inequalities in the merit of our chirography, and that we have written better at one time and worse at another, owing to the state of our nerves, and the feeling which we happened to have at the time for what we were about, but the average we find to be the same, and we are annoyed at perceiving that our style of writing is substantially as at first. The reason of all this is, that we have adhered too much to *preconceived ideas* of how letters should be formed, instead of dropping or largely modifying them, and substituting better, as indispensable preliminaries to the improvement we court.

Order of Progress—About the first thing a people do when they emerge out of a state of barbarism is to improve their weapons of offence and defence; next they improve in their cooking; next in dress; next in their habitations; next in morals; next in manners; next in social

customs ; next in laws ; then in government ; then in commerce ; then in wealth ; then in the arts ; then in learning ; then in intelligence ; then in wisdom, and last in goodness.

Political Progress — The world is getting on so fast, that the only safe rule for a theorist to adopt, who wishes not to be distanced and left out of sight by the march of events and the progress of principles, is to start as a radical. Even so, unless he keeps pace with the advances of the time, and appropriates at least some of its "thick coming fancies," he will get to be thought of in a few years as tending to conservatism.*

* As indicating, within a brief space, the rapid progress of modern society, let me quote two passages, one from Motley's "Dutch Republic," describing the state of society in the twelfth century, and the other from Hume, giving a picture of the mode of living in England only three or four centuries ago.

Says Motley : " The number of slaves throughout the Netherlands was very large ; the number belonging to the bishopric of Utrecht enormous. The condition of those belonging to laymen was much more painful. The *lyf-eigere*, or absolute slaves, were the most wretched. They were mere brutes. They had none of the natural attributes of humanity, their life and death were in their master's hands, they had no claim to a fraction of their own labor, or its fruits."

And Hume says : " Erasmus ascribes the frequent plagues in England in his time to the nastiness and dirt and sloven-

And yet, political progress, to be permanent, must be gradual. An unlooked-for triumph, attended by a measure of success beyond the expectations of the most sanguine, has the same effect as a signal and unexpected defeat—it bewilders, and finds us unprepared to meet the exigencies to which it gives rise. More than one party has been thus ruined. The most sudden, and, for the moment, the most complete revolutions upon record, were those of 1848. But they were also, and for the reason indicated, the least permanent in their duration.*

only habits among the people. 'The floors,' says he, 'are commonly of clay, strewed with rushes, under which lies unmolested an ancient collection of beer, grease, fragments, bones, excrements of dogs and cats, and everything that is nasty. Hollingshed, who lived in Queen Elizabeth's reign, gives a very curious account of the plain, or rather rude way of living of the preceding generation. There was scarcely a chimney to the houses, even in considerable towns; the fire was kindled by the wall, and the smoke sought its way out at the roof, or door, or windows: the houses were nothing but wattling plastered over with clay; the people slept on straw pallets, and had a good round log under their head for a pillow, and almost all the furniture and utensils were of wood.' "

* The chase, formerly the pastime of kings and nobles, in 1848 became that of the people, with this difference, that they had then kings themselves as the objects of their pursuit. Unfortunately for them, as the result disclosed, they too imperfectly understood the rules of the noble sport to which they were called, and allowed their game to escape them.

Social Progress — The permanence of political progress, again, is in every instance determined by the measure and character of the social progress that has preceded or accompanies it. Indeed, notable events of every kind are of very great importance only so far as they are associated with, or tend to promote, social improvement. Science may achieve its miracles, and art its wonders; poetry may weave its numbers, and music enchant by its harmonies; but they are as nothing till yoked to the car of social progress, and made auxiliary to the great ends of enriching the poor, enlightening the ignorant, and elevating the degraded.

Ultimate of Progress — Probably the highest condition to which any community in the past has arrived, affords but a faint type of that loftier elevation to which society at large is advancing. Relieved from the prejudices that once enthralled his spirit, and victorious over the limitations that art and science will banish from the domain of his circumstances, the Man of the Future, invested with the graces of Apollo, the wings of Mercury, and the strength of Mars, will contrast with the Man of the Present as "Hyperion to a Satyr."

PROVIDENCE.

GOD has not made this our life of preparation altogether lovely, for then it would be too short, and hard to leave ; nor yet altogether pitiful, for then it would be too long, and hard to bear.

PUNISHMENT.

UNAUTHORIZED punishment of crime is itself a crime.

Capital Punishment — Lord Clarendon's remark that hanging is just the poorest use to which a man can be put, is too temperate. It fails to express the intensity of disgust proper towards this worst relic of a receding barbarism. To vindicate the sanctity of human life by taking it is an outrage upon reason. The spectacle of a human being dangling at the end of a gallows-rope is a degradation of humanity.

Eternal Punishment — We believe that God's power is without limit : why should we not believe the same of his mercy ?

Reduced by sickness to the verge of the grave, the doctrine of eternal punishment seemed to me then, as now, utterly at variance with that beneficence which good and wise men, and the supporters of the theory themselves, ascribe to the Deity. I did not believe that I deserved it, and I did not fear it.

“Heaven is first a temper, and then a place,” says an old writer. And so of hell and purgatory. At least, however it may be in the next world—as to which it is presumption to pretend to *know*, or to speak positively—in this life, and probably in the next, hell is chiefly portable, and exists mainly as we carry it about with us in our consciousness.

Protestant and Catholic Theories of Punishment—It is rather to the disadvantage of the Roman Catholics that they need two hells to keep them straight, while the Protestants manage (with some difficulty, it is true) to get along with but one. But then, the one hell of a bigoted Protestant is more dreadful than the two hells of a liberal Catholic.

PURITANISM.

A CONDEMNATION of the Puritan's theology was expressed in his grim visage. God's truth never made so lugubrious a face.

PURPOSES.

THE favorable time for accomplishing an object has gone by when the purpose has grown cold. Enthusiasm — warmth of purpose — is needed for all great enterprises. Indeed, things vigorously purposed are already half accomplished. A concentrated will makes an executive hand.

PURSUITS.

THE highest excellence is seldom achieved in more than one vocation. The roads leading to distinction in separate pursuits diverge, and the nearer we advance towards excellence in one direction, the farther we recede from it in another.

Value of the Objects pursued by Us — We are

in general too intent upon accomplishing our objects to be able rightly to calculate their value. We fall into the mistake of overestimating their worth, from the pleasure or the trouble the pursuit of them gives us.

What Pursuits are most Honorable?—Something of regard for public interests, as well as for mere private advantage, must enter into our pursuits, to give to them an elevated character. To administer to the necessities of life, and to add to its comforts, its graces, and its enjoyments, these are our noblest employments. "It is an honor," says Theodore Parker,* "to be

* At the mention of this name, let me pause to pay a brief tribute to an honored memory. Theodore Parker was perhaps the most thoroughly religious man of his day. Many good men will dissent from his religious views, but all candid men will concede the energy with which he sustained them. His power of statement was indeed wonderful. No conqueror ever arrayed his forces with greater skill, or brought them to bear with more crushing force, than he the resources of reason, of history, and of statistics against the evils he opposed. This power he derived as much from the immense range of his acquirements as from the native energy of his character. His learning was vast and various, his love of humanity ardent and profound, and his devotion to the interests of truth as deep and as sincere as that of any character of any period. Not a man of commanding original genius, with even little of creative power, and less remarkable for the originality of his views than for the extremes to which he pushed them,

able to mould iron, to be skilful at working in cloth, wood, clay, leather. And they are the heroes of the race who abridge the time of human toil, and multiply its results ; who win great truths from God, and send them to a people's heart ; they who balance the many and the one into harmonious action, so that all are united and yet each left free."

he was still a brave, true-hearted, thoroughly manly man—of the people, and for the people.





QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

QUESTIONS are usually cheaply asked, but sometimes dearly answered. But this is a timorous maxim. Better than this, because conceived in a freer spirit, is that aphorism of Joubert — “Questions show the breadth of the mind ; answers, its delicacy.”

QUOTERS AND QUOTING.

FERTILITY of quotation argues an innate deficiency of original power,” says W. Alfred Jones. But surely, the remark is more pointed than true. To quote copiously and well, requires taste, judgment, and erudition, a feeling for the beautiful, an appreciation of the noble, and a sense of the profound. To illustrate with learning, too, and to sustain by authorities, is to render convincing what were else, peradventure, unheeded — especially as more minds, as

Theodore Parker says, accept "authority as truth" than "truth as authority." Besides, what Charles Kingsley says of plagiarists, may be said with greater emphasis of quoters. "No earnest thinker," he observes, "is a plagiarist pure and simple. He will never borrow from others that which he has not already, more or less, thought out for himself." And very often, in quoting a passage, a new or enlarged meaning is attached to it. Thus, "waste words, addle questions" are four words of Bishop Andrews, meaning, as appears upon a reference to the context,* "waste words, *foolish* questions" — the word *addle*, though generally used as a verb, being, in this instance, used as an adjective. In quoting these words, a writer has only to omit the comma and thus express a much broader import, namely, "Waste words *confound* questions." At all events, the next best thing to being witty one's self, is to be able to quote another's wit. He presents me with what is always an acceptable gift who brings me news of a great thought before unknown. He enriches me without impoverishing himself. The judicious quoter, too, helps on what is much needed in the world, a

* See his works, edition of 1641, page 239.

freer circulation of good thoughts, pure feelings, and pleasant fancies. Luminous quotations, also, atone, by their interest, for the dulness of an inferior book, and add to the value of a superior work by the variety which they lend to its style and treatment.

It is safer to quote what is written than what is spoken. What a man writes it is fair to presume he believes as a matter of general conviction, but it is not so with what he utters in the freedom of conversation. In that he may only express the feeling of the moment, and not his settled judgment, or matured opinion. Thus, when Dr. Johnson once observed that he knew as much at eighteen as at forty—a remark that has been quoted as if it were to be taken with literal exactness—he doubtless intended only to give an emphatic expression to that natural feeling of dissatisfaction, which every elevated nature experiences at times, in contemplating the measure of its progress and the extent of its acquisitions.





READERS AND READING.

MANY read from curiosity; more for a passing entertainment; some from a desire to improve their conversation; others that they may be thought learned; but the more judicious few read to extend the circle of their thoughts, to enlarge the boundaries of their knowledge, and thus to open a wider field in which the mind can take greater range, and find more ample scope and material for enjoyment.

In reading, the great art is to seize upon and retain the leading ideas and circumstances, rejecting, or paying less attention to, the accessories. In this way we take in fewer, but more determinate ideas, and such as are more easily recollected. Most well-informed people, for example, have read, at some time or other, a description of the pyramid of Cheops, and yet but

few can state from recollection its elevation, or the number of feet on each side of its base—circumstances so material, that without them no adequate idea of its dimensions can exist, or be communicated.

Readers of Books and Newspaper Readers— Readers of books alone, according to the extent of their reading, acquire credit for scholarship, while readers of newspapers merely, though equally industrious as readers, obtain no such distinction. And yet the difference between them is chiefly in this, that the former take a greater interest in things past, the latter in things passing. Both, as specialists, may be equally learned in their several spheres, and equally ignorant out of them.

REFORMERS AND REFORMATIONS.

REFORMERS, when they err in their theories, generally err on the disinterested side, as they can seldom expect to be benefited by the proposed changes; which is more than can be said of their more violent opponents, who, when they profess to be true to their opinions,

are frequently only maintaining interests dependent upon the existing order of things.

On the other hand, reformers, from being deeply impressed with the evils they seek to redress, and actively engaged in a warfare against them, are apt to contract a certain habit of denunciation, extending to persons and things at large, by which their reputations for amiability are injuriously affected. This is particularly noticeable in that portion of the press devoted to progress. A generous indignation against the evils they oppose carries them too far. As if a proper spirit cannot be exhibited towards abuses without a resort to violence—of speech or of action! Their usual procedure, in redressing injuries, is too often like that of a madman, who, perceiving a stain upon a glass, shatters it to pieces by way of wiping it out.

The advocates of social and political innovation, again, must not be in too great haste to reform the world.* “A city,” said Napoleon,

* Referring to the metaphysical tendency of the Scotch mind, Sydney Smith tells a pleasant story of a Scotch miss, who was overheard to say to her partner at a ball, during

"with 80,000 inhabitants, barricaded streets, and artillery placed at the gates, *cannot be taken by the collar.*" And so of many conceded evils. The world must first traverse a wide interval before it can even enter upon those paths of advanced progress which minds wise beyond their times have marked out for it. Before a state can adopt and maintain Plato's Republic, it must first make Platonians of a majority of its citizens. And then, the world has

one of the pauses in the dance, "What you say, my Lord, is very true of love in the *abstract*, but" — Just then the music sounded, and the rest was lost. Something like this may be said of the ultra social reformer. What he proposes is "all very well in the *abstract*, but" — the conditions for carrying out his reforms do not *as yet* exist. As in the instance of Mohammed Ali's attempt, related in Prime's "Boat Life in Egypt and Nubia," to promote the interests of literature, and to establish the publishing business in the former country, the intention may be excellent, but that alone is not enough to insure success. Mohammed published a number of books at the government press in Boulak, and among others an edition of the "Arabian Nights," and a work on geometry, both large books, the former in two large volumes. But who in Egypt, as the writer suggests, could be found to purchase books! "The edition lay unsold, till the government issued an order requiring every person in their employ to take five or more copies of each. Some hundreds of men who could not read a letter were thus supplied with several copies of valuable books. The result was that they were glad to sell them for whatever they could get, and for a while books were cheap in Cairo."

been so long going astray, that it must needs consume much time in retracing its steps. Communities that have become demoralized by processes continued through centuries, cannot be regenerated except by the operation of dissimilar causes extending over a long period.*

“*The Reformation*” — The great error of the sixteenth century was in following the lead of Luther and Calvin. The period promised an utter rout of theological dogmas, but largely through their influence the Reformation, so called, as far as it extended, was limited in its scope to the substitution of one imperfect religious system for another. The time called for a great corrector of credulity, but Luther, and after him Calvin, only confirmed the religious credulity of the age in some things, and led it in new directions in others. It would have been quite as well had the counsels of the philosopher Erasmus prevailed. A purified Catholicism, such as he favored, would have been perhaps even preferable to either Calvinism or Lutheranism.

* “All attempts,” says Robert Hall, “to urge men forward, even in the right path, beyond the measure of their light, are impracticable; and unlawful if they were practicable: augment their light, conciliate their affections, and they will follow of their own accord.”

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS WORSHIPPERS.

IF our existence is limited only to this world, religion is still of the greatest consequence, as more largely determining character, and more vastly influencing happiness, than any other single cause; and if it extends to a life beyond, it is of incalculably greater importance, as determining character and influencing happiness through illimitable periods of time. Indeed, without a belief in the being of God, without a recognition of his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, and without faith in a divine system of rewards and punishments, wrought into the constitution of things, life is at once stripped of its majesty, and bereaved of its noblest promises.*

* Concerning the *indispensableness* of religion, Tillotson has this noble passage. "If a man," he says, "by a vast and imperious mind, could command all the knowledge of Nature and of art; could attain to a mastery of all languages, and sound the depths of all arts and sciences; measure the earth and the heavens; tell the stars, and declare their order and motions; could discourse of the interests of all states, the intrigues of all courts, and give an account of the history of all ages; could speak of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that groweth out of the wall; and of beasts also, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes: and yet should be destitute of the knowledge of God and of his duty, all this would be but an impertinent vanity, and a more glittering kind of ignorance."

But beyond these fundamental parts of religion, true religion is matter of feeling, rather than of opinion. The religion of the cultivated and the thoughtful, especially, is emotional, is in all ages the same, and is compounded of admiration of the works of Nature, awe of the power, and reverence for the wisdom, manifested in them, and of gratitude for the beneficence which has adapted them to human needs.

Perhaps, indeed, for a certain class of minds, not inconsiderable in number, and distinguished for their culture and intelligence, a system of religion based upon the love of Nature, and the study of God's attributes through his works, is not impracticable. Perhaps it would be wrong to say that such a system would not be applicable to all—that it is not in truth the vital part of all religions.

Ancient and Modern Religious Opinions—What Leigh Hunt says of the religious opinions of the ancients, may be affirmed, with equal truth, of the religious views of the moderns. “The great multitude,” he observes, “believed everything; the very few disbelieved everything;

the philosophers and poets entertained a refined natural religion, which, while it pronounced upon nothing," (of course he means beyond the primary principles of natural religion,) "rejected what was evidently unworthy of the spirit of the Creator."

Natural and Revealed Religion—Paley commences his work on the Evidences of Christianity by a statement that the question is between the Christian religion and no religion. But this is stating the question too broadly. Natural religion existed before revealed, and it can never perish but with the nature of which it forms a part. "Religion," said old John Selden, "is like the fashion; one man wears his doublet slashed, another laced, another plain; but every man has a doublet: so every man has his religion. We differ about trimming."

Origin of False Religions—Many impositions gain currency from being originally too palpable to be much talked about. It is thus with religious impostures. In the age in which they originate, the wise let them pass as too gross for exposure: in the next it is too late.

Religion and Theologies — Religion is as the ground ; theologies as the shadows playing over it : this remains ; the others pass away.

Uniformity of Opinion, and Especially of Religious Opinions, Impossible, and not Desirable if Possible — Differences in character necessitate differences of opinion. We look upon life and its phenomena from different angles, with different capacities, and with ever-varying moods. The multiformity of impressions thus derived inevitably exclude uniformity of opinion. To think alike we must all have been formed alike, have remained forever alike, and held eternally the same relations to Nature and each other. We cannot all sing with the same voices, with equal skill, and with the same modifications of tone, but our hymns of praise and thanksgiving are probably none the less acceptable to the Great Father, whose power, wisdom, and goodness they celebrate.

REPOSE.

REPOSE without stagnation is the state most favorable to happiness. “ The great felicity of life,” says Seneca, “ is to be without perturbations.”

REPROACHES.

TOO much reproach “o’erleaps itself, and falls on t’ other side.” Pricked up too sharply, the delinquent, like a goaded bull, grows sullen and savage, and, the persecution continuing, ends in rushing madly on the spear that wounds him.

REPUTATION.

AN advantage of an achieved reputation ought to be, that of enabling one to be dull at pleasure, without fear of being set down as permanently stupid. But, however much of time, labor, or other means it takes to establish a reputation, it frequently happens that it requires nearly as much to maintain it. One who has written a good book, is expected on all occasions to “talk like a book.” Or, if one has achieved an act of heroism, he is expected to perform acts of heroism for the edification of all who approach him. There are people who can never believe they see a lion unless they hear him roar.

RESENTMENTS.

RESENTMENTS, carried too far, expose us to a fate analogous to that of the fish-hawk, when he strikes his talons too deep into a fish beyond his capacity to lift, and is carried under and drowned by it.

RESOLUTION.

IT is WILL," says a western editor, "that rules the world." And indeed, a strong will deals with the hard facts of life as a sculptor with his marbles, making them facile and yielding to his purposes, and conquering their stubbornness by a greater stubbornness in himself.

RESPECTABILITY.

FEW people are so far assured of their respectability as not to make some parade of their claims to it.

REVOLUTIONS.

REVOLUTIONS are largely the work of men between the ages of twenty and thirty.

During this period the mind is in a state of fermentation, prone to novelties and the pursuit of Utopias, filled with speculative ideas, and presumptuously eager to have them resolved into concrete forms. After, or towards the close of this period, new conditions supervene: the blood cools; the passions subside; evils that chafed and fretted grow familiar and come to be considered as inevitable; the fervor of hope abates; we grow less sanguine; the thoughts insensibly turn from the life before to the life around us; family ties spring up; the speculative gives way to the practical; property is acquired, and along with something to conserve arises the spirit of conservatism. We have fought for our opinions, but the battle has been protracted, and we long for repose.

The French Revolution—The excesses of the French revolutionists doubtless contributed more to check the progress of a great cause—that of civil liberty—than all the political events since combined. But, on the subject of the comparative moderation of the two great parties—republican and monarchical—of the period, listen to the testimony of Lord Holland. “The

neutral as well as the belligerent powers of Europe," he says, "had as little pretension to the praise of moderation in their views, scruple in their means, or humanity in their feelings, as the French revolutionists; and the expression of their principles was always as unqualified, and not unfrequently as coarse, vulgar, and unmannerly, as that of the sansculotte demagogues at Paris."

RICH AND POOR.

AS many suffer from too much as too little.
A fat body makes a lean mind.

Perhaps the strongest incentive to the acquisition of wealth is the idea that as we acquire fortune we acquire consideration in the world. The world indeed! the world of a dozen cronies, and a half-dozen dependants.

There is a possible period in which men will be ashamed to be rich.*

* Now, however, there are a good many people in the world who spend half their time in thinking what they *would* do if they were rich, and the other half in conjecturing what they *shall* do as they are not.

The extent of poverty in the world is much exaggerated. Our sensitiveness makes half our poverty; our fears — anxieties for ills that never happen — a greater part of the other half. Poverty, in its rigorous sense, consists in want of food, clothing, shelter, warmth. Literally, not one in ten thousand suffer from any of these. The dreariest poverty is that of the heart. Banish this, and we shall all be rich.

No social system, no state policy, can endure, is destined to perpetuity, that tends to make the poor poorer and the rich richer. Such a system is partially ours. But here is our consolation. "Want is not an absolutely needful thing," says Theodore Parker, "but very needful to teach us industry, economy, thrift, and the creative arts. . . . It will be here no more when we have learned its lesson. Want is here on sufferance, and men can eject it if they will. Poverty, like all evils, is amenable to suppression."

Hope is the best part of our riches. What sufficeth it that we have the wealth of the Indies in our pockets, if we have not the hope of Heaven in our souls.

RIDICULE.

RIDICULE is less "a test of truth," than a proof of a scoffing spirit.

It is because we suspect ridiculous qualities in ourselves that we are so much afraid of ridicule. Perfect self-respect exists only where we are able not only to bear a laugh at our expense, but, if the joke is a good one, to join in it.

RIVALRIES.

IN ambition, as in love, the successful can afford to be indulgent towards their rivals. The prize our own, it is graceful to recognize the merit that vainly aspired to it.

RUINS.

RUINS appeal to the sensibility from the contrast which, as representatives of the "dead past," they present to the "living present," and from our seeing darkly prefigured in them our own future. Though it is pleasant for the young to wander among the remains of antiquity, and

muse over prostrate columns, broken arches,
 and mouldering walls, an old man, or one in im-
 paired health and spirits, will do well to avoid
 these wrecks of time, lest they should suggest to
 him that he is himself perhaps but a greater
 ruin than that he looks upon.





THE SABBATH.

LIFE has been called a warfare :—
blessed then is the periodical armis-
tice of the Sabbath :—blessed not
merely as a day of rest, but also as a day of re-
trospection. It is only in the pauses of the fight
that we can see how the battle is going.

SATIETY.

THERE is no sense of weariness like that
which closes in a day of eager and uninter-
mittent pursuit of pleasure. The apple is eaten,
but “the core sticks in the throat.” Expectation
has then given way to ennui ; appetite to satiety ;
the morning’s strength to the evening’s fatigue ;
the taste has been cloyed with the sweets it
coveted ; the brain has lost its vivacity, the feet
their vigor, and the drooping head longs for its
pillow, for rest and oblivion.

“ Who rises from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down ?

Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures, with the unabated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed."

SCHOOLS.

THE country, with its natural play-grounds — its scenes of beauty, its freedom, and its freshness — is the place for children to be educated in. Who, that has contrasted the different effects which the acceptable words, "School's dismissed!" produce in town and country, and has observed the sober deportment of the boys and girls of the town-school, as they issue with regular steps from the school-door, and demurely take their way homewards, and the wild hilarity, the glee, the frolicksome spirit, the running, racing, jumping, and shouting of a score or two of rustic youngsters, just let loose from the tyranny of geography, reading, writing, and arithmetic, can doubt it?

Military Schools — The existence of military schools is a proof that the other schools have not done their duty.

SELF-COMPLACENCY.

THERE is nothing we are so thankful for as that our vices are not like other people's vices. There is usually, as we fancy, something in the causes leading to our frailties that excuses them. There are even some weaknesses which are peculiar and distinctive to generous characters, as freckles are to a fair skin. Ours are of this sort. Or if, perchance, our errors are at times in a degree inexcusable, our virtues, at least, are all, as merchants say of mess pork, in "good order and of prime quality." Apropos to which — A woman being reproached for being false to her husband — "Well, but," said she, "I am true to my lovers."

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

THE best things are done without self-consciousness. A literary man, for instance, loses much of his power of high literary production when he becomes consciously a "literary man." A professional philanthropist, too, gets but little honor from the judicious, and deserves, perhaps, less. He only values reputa-

tion, it may be, high enough to make sacrifices for it.

It is only by going forward that we can expect to get rid of our self-consciousness. Both the past and the present are full of us.

SELF-DECEPTION.

MANY an honest man practises upon himself an amount of deceit sufficient, if practised upon another, and in a little different way, to send him to the State's prison.

SELF-DENIAL.

WHO denies not himself, in many things, God, it is probable, will deny him.

SELF-FORGETFULNESS.

IN our own case we diligently practise the virtues of to forget and to forgive. And why not? We owe at least as much charity to ourselves as to others.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

THERE is but one greater absurdity than that of a man aiming to know all about himself, which is, for him to think he knows himself. No man knows, can know, the fiftieth part of the good that is in him, nor the hundredth part of the evil. If one is a good sort of man, with tastes for pure habits, and a disposition that makes him "content to dwell in decencies forever," let him thank Providence for it, not himself. A different adjustment of his antecedents might have made him anything but what he is. Of us all, perhaps, it may be said, as was said by Goethe of himself, "there is no offence of which we might not, under given circumstances, have been guilty."

It is because we are dissatisfied with ourselves that we are so anxious to have others think well of us; and were we conscious of meriting their good, we would care less for their ill, opinions.

SELF-LOVE.

WE take an immediate interest in persons whom we would otherwise pass without notice, when we discover that they take an interest in us. So subtle is the spirit of self-love, that what we take to be our recognition of another's merit, turns out, upon examination, to be only a recognition of his recognition of ours.

SELF-RELIANCE.

SELF-DISTRUST is the cause of most of our failures. In the assurance of strength there is strength, and they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers.

SENSITIVENESS.

SENSITIVENESS is closely allied to egotism. Indeed, excessive sensibility is only another name for morbid self-consciousness. The cure for tender sensibilities is to make more of our objects and less of ourselves. The course of a sensitive man through life resembles that of an

old ship in heavy weather, that sails along groaning and creaking in all her timbers. A manlier nature is like a stancher craft, that buffets aside each saucy wave, and makes her port with less ado.

Sensitiveness to the Weather — From the operation of the above remarks, however, let me except a certain sensitiveness to the weather. Finer organizations, like lucifer matches, cannot be made to kindle so well in damp periods. The humidity that is in the atmosphere enters into and represses in them every tendency to gayety or enthusiasm. It is even the mark of a gross nature not to be sensitive to atmospheric changes. Even iron contracts and expands under the influence of heat and cold; how much harder must their natures be that remain unaffected by them!

That extreme sensibility to the weather is quite compatible with high health and a sound bodily organization, appears in the instance of Goethe, of whom one of his biographers* says, that "excelling in all active sports, he was al-

* Lewes.

most a barometer in sensitiveness to atmospheric influences." This, it is well to add, is said of a man of whom the same writer further observes — "Hufeland, the physician, who had made a special study of the human organization, with reference to its power of vitality, said, that never did he meet with a man in whom bodily and mental organization were so perfect as in Goethe. Not only was prodigious strength of vitality remarkable in him, but equally so the perfect balance of functions."

SENSUALISM.

THE body of a sensualist is the coffin of a dead soul.

SENTIMENT.

I CONFESS I am more interested in great sentiments than in great actions, as they seem to have their root more directly and reliably in greatness of spirit. They are, as it were, so many parts of a noble character, while the latter are only incidents of a life, and possibly the results of generous but exceptional impulses.

Xenophon, advancing sword in hand upon the enemy, or enduring with cheerfulness incredible fatigues and hardships, is only one in ten thousand that accompany him and share in his exploits; but Xenophon urging upon and inspiring his dejected companions, when their leaders are cut off, with the noble sentiment that it is better to perish with honor than to live in ignominy, impresses me as one not *of* but *in* ten thousand.

SERVICE.

CALL loudly if you would be answered quickly.

Nature's Ministrations — The sun is every man's servant, working every day in the year for him, and exacting no wages.

SICKNESS.

BY withdrawing us from a participation in the active scenes of life, by breaking up our old habits, and by changing the direction of our thoughts, sickness sometimes produces an effect upon us similar to that which Darwin, in

his "Travels in South America," describes as following an earthquake. "A bad earthquake," he says, "at once destroys the oldest associations; the world, the very emblem of all that is solid, has moved beneath our feet, like a crust over a fluid; one second of time has conveyed to the mind a strange idea of insecurity, which hours of reflection would never have created."

Sickness is indeed a great instructor. It puts many things in a true light, which were before seen only in a false. It calls for an exercise of fortitude, and disciplines to patience. It originates grave and wholesome trains of thought, leads to a review of one's past life, and induces resolutions of amendment. Great, therefore, are the virtues of sickness!

Even our horror of death abates in extreme sickness. Face to face with our mortal enemy, we dread him less than before we had encountered him.

SILENCE.

SILENCE, when nothing need be said, is the eloquence of discretion.

Silence under Attack—Silence under provocation is the most stinging of replies. When you are right, silence is not the worst defence ; when you are wrong, it is the best.*

SIMPLICITY.

BACON tells us that a little knowledge leads to skepticism, but that an increase thereof brings a return of faith. In like manner we may say that a partial development of character is attended with a certain love of ostentation and display, but that a more advanced development restores to simpler tastes and habits. We see this illustrated among the Quakers. The foremost people in the world in the purity of their practical ethics, they are also the simplest in their habits and modes of life.†

* Americans forget this, and do their assailants too much honor, when they reply to the ungenerous attacks upon American character and institutions of a portion of the English press. All attacks upon character recoil of themselves upon their authors when they are unfounded. Besides, no nation, as Dr. Johnson says of authors, was ever permanently written down but by itself. An Englishman has but one fault—an absence of all the virtues—where his national prejudices are concerned. Then, he needs a candle to see the sun.

† I have elsewhere excepted to the Quakers' interdiction of music, dancing, and the fine arts. To this offence they

SINCERITY.

IN his enumeration of the virtues to be cultivated, Franklin, by a happy accident, or a fine instinct of propriety, places Sincerity as the central figure of his beautiful group. Without sincerity there can be no confidence, without confidence no respect, without respect no sympathy, and without sympathy no world worth living in. Without sincerity, love itself is but a word upon the lips, not a feeling of the heart.

Loss of sincerity is loss of vital power.

SLAVERY.

BBETTER freedom with a crust, than slavery with every luxury.

add a narrow pietism, and a too commercial spirit. Otherwise, the Quakers are the most sensible people in the world. They eschew politics, as a profession; they seldom go to law; they pay no priests to confirm them, perhaps, in their errors; they rarely make speeches, and they even make love, as far as is known, in a sensible way—the most difficult of all achievements. As merchants, the Quakers seldom fail, and never engage in any disreputable business; in the domestic circle they are affectionate; as friends, hospitable. Good citizens, society is never taxed for the support of their poor, or the confinement of their criminals—in fine, who is so admirable in so many respects, and exceptionable in so few things, as Broadbrim?

Slavery in The United States—When a limb, or a part of a limb, is diseased, and past cure, the surgeon's remedy is to cut it off. As with the body personal, so with the body politic. The South is the diseased limb of the United States.

SMILES.

SOMETHING of a person's character may be discovered by observing when and how he smiles. Some people never smile; they merely grin.*

SOCIETY.

TOO much society makes a man frivolous; too little, a savage. In the one case he loses his proper individuality; in the other he is developed into a monster of selfishness.

* Laughter, also, is an exponent of character. "A good laugh," says W. W. Howe, "can only come from a warm heart." It is not safe to repose confidence in a man that laughs after the fashion of he, he, he! Such a one can scarcely have either deep convictions, or sound principles. As to the manly qualities generally, it is quite impossible to associate them with a frivolous laughter. Perhaps, indeed, men may be divided, with respect to their laughter, into three classes, namely, the he, he, he! the ho, ho, ho! and the ha, ha, ha! men—the shallow, the gross, and the refined.

Society Distasteful to the Modest, the Diffident, and the Proud—Modesty loves a corner. The diffident avoid companies, distrusting their ability to entertain them. Proud men hate crowds, unless they come to do them honor. The presence of so many people, regardless of their merits, offends their more than proper pride.

An Essential of Good Society—Society would gain much in the pleasantness of its intercourse, were its members to restrict their communication (were such a thing possible) to the expression only of their more cheerful feelings, digesting their ill moods in silence, as some engines are made to consume their own smoke.

“Mutual Admiration Societies”—This ought to be a phrase of honor instead of reproach. It is well with any body of men when they can find—each in the others—something to admire. It is too much in the usual course of things for merit to envy merit: all honor then to the noble spirits that overcome this tendency, and are able to resolve their intercourse into a relation of mutual admiration instead of mutual envy.

Social Regeneration — Private worth is the only true basis of public prosperity. Still, ministers and moralists do but tinker at the regeneration of the world in merely recommending individual improvement. The most prolific cause of depravity is the social system that forms the character to what it is. The virtues, like plants, to flourish must have a soil and air adapted to them. A plant at the seaside yields soda; the same plant grown inland produces potash.

SPEAKERS AND SPEECH-MAKING.

FLUENT speakers have this in common with ready writers, that they can express themselves glibly upon a subject, but seldom profoundly. They are the light cavalry and flying artillery of wit, in contradistinction to the sappers and miners and heavy ordnance corps of reason. Or, like swallows, they skim lightly and swiftly over the ground, seldom rising much above, and never going at all below it. Their art is surface judging, and their chief excellence is, not that their opinions are worth more than those of other men, but that they are more readily expressed, and that they can form their judgments even while uttering them.

Speech and Action — Involved in their modes of speech, but clear in their methods of action, certain characters appear to advantage as actors, but rarely as speakers. This was peculiarly true of Cromwell. His speeches abound in errors of taste and judgment, but in his enterprises he had ever a clear perception of his ends, and adapted his means to their accomplishment with marvellous efficiency.

Directness in Speech — Words, like cannon balls, should go direct to their mark. And yet, in the matter of plain speaking we are like a soldier I once knew, who, in his first battle, was afraid to fire off his musket, lest he should hurt somebody.

Incidents of Good Speaking — It is not necessary to say much to be thought to possess the higher powers of speech. One good sentence is worth twenty dull ones.

To speak to the purpose, one must speak with a purpose.

So many speeches, like so many faces, have

no individuality in them! A speaker should put his character into what he says. The speech should smack of the man.

We sheathe the sword of speech when we put it into conventional forms.

And finally: A speech, to be good, must be precluded by a thorough knowledge of the subject, interluded with good sense, and concluded with despatch.*

Noise a Non-Essential of Speech—In oratory, whenever a great noise is made, it should be about something that justifies it. There is a kind of oratory that is of the voice—voicy—that seeks to awaken our sensibilities as barbarians try to awaken fear in their adversaries, by assailing them with loud shouts and fearful

* Legislatures, especially, as a Southern journalist observes, "should not be converted into schools of declamation. It is a poor idea," as he says, "that cannot be stated in five minutes. Set speeches," he therefore urges, "should be eschewed or cut short. It is absurd," he adds, "for a man whose habit of speaking enables him to spread a single commonplace over a two hours speech, to denounce a five or ten minutes rule as abridging the liberty of speech."

outcries. But, truth whispered is more effectual than nonsense thundered.

STUDIES.

STUDIES should be thorough. What is once well learned is seldom ever wholly forgotten. Studies, also, should be adapted to prospective employments. They should be to the student what his tools are to the artisan,—the means for working effectively at his particular art.

STYLE.

WHEN one has even little to say, it is still of much importance to say it well. And much more in weightier matters, the style should be in keeping with the subject-matter.*

Language being the apparel of thought and

* The amount of labor required to perfect a style appears in the instance of Washington Irving. "Mr. Irving," said one to me who was familiar with his literary habits, as we followed together his honored remains to their last resting-place—"Mr. Irving wrote, and then, very often, rewrote, revised and re-revised, touched and retouched, with wonderful patience. He seemed to study every word—yes," (with emphasis) "every syllable."

sensibility, a sententious style is chiefly appropriate to weightier ideas and the profounder feelings, as a close-fitting dress is appropriate only to a graceful form. Where the thought or feeling is superficial, a graceful redundancy of words serves the purpose of a loose and flowing robe, to hide all deficiencies.

All good writing leaves something unexpressed. At least, it is a good rule in rhetoric never to add to a thought after it is suggested. The judicious author never tires by his elaborations. A brief suggestion is enough for a quick wit. He points to the mine he has discovered, and leaves his reader to find health and treasure in the working of it.

In literary performances, as in Gothic architecture, the taste of the age is largely in favor of the pointed styles. Our churches and our books must bristle all over with points, or they are not so much thought of.

SUCCESS.

THE different degrees of success that attend us is not so much owing to original differences in our capacities, as to the measure of discretion that mingles with and determines the direction of our abilities. In many departments of industry, it is even not so much the able as the unable that succeed. The former know their strength, and rely too much upon it; the latter their weakness, and guard against it.

Besides this—A secret of success in nearly every enterprise is usually contained in the answer to the question—how earnest is he? A further leading secret of efficiency is, to act at once upon our ideas while our fancy is yet warm and in a glow with them. But, the leading condition of success is to have but one object, and to pursue it with persistence. “The great art,” says Goethe, “is judiciously to limit and isolate yourself.” To the same effect is the observation of Cicero—“Bring all knowledge to the focus of one pursuit.”

ally mistake the causes of their failures when they refer them to causes out of themselves. A worthy of this sort, who had repeatedly lost everything but his self-complacency, being at a loss otherwise to account for his ill-success, finally concluded, as he said, that Providence had adopted a prejudice against him. Instead of this, as before suggested, we are baulked of success in our pursuits, less through indolence and want of capacity, than from our neglecting to labor long and steadily enough in one, and only one, direction. Like bad reasoners, we forsake main points to go off on collateral issues. Elevated objects of pursuit, especially, like jealous mistresses, demand an unqualified devotion.

Small Successes — There are none so low but they have their triumphs. Small successes suffice for small souls.*

* John Foster tells us of a man who used to break stones on the road, who was vain in a high degree of his skill; — "he would break a load of stones," he would say, "with any man in England." He also speaks of a chimney-sweeper who indulged in a similar boast of superiority, with an appearance of great self-complacency.

SUFFERING.

OUR miseries are the expiations of our sins:—suffering, the hard mallet that drives in the sharp wedge of truth.

SUGGESTIONS.

LIFE has no royal road, and few explicit guides to truth; but in lieu of these it abounds in scattered hints, rich in their suggestiveness, and invaluable as aids in our progress towards it. Perhaps the best part of our wisdom, because the most truly our own, is that derived from gathering up these, and developing their significance.

In venturing a suggestion, however, it is important to avoid the appearance of giving advice. Say to a junior army officer, for instance,—In bad weather take care of your men; in good weather they can take care of themselves—and the young Napoleon will perhaps resent the suggestion as implying an assumption of superior wisdom. At least, the hortatory form of the proposal will probably prevent his appreciating the good feeling in which it originates.

SYMPATHY.

TO be without sympathy is to be alone in the world — without friends or country, home or kindred.

There are many things of which we can become conscious only through sympathy, and of which therefore a cold and unsympathetic nature must ever remain in ignorance.

Nations, like individuals, are powerful in the degree that they command the sympathies of their neighbors. England is to-day the most powerful state in Europe; but her strength consists, not so much in the number of men she can arm and equip and send into the field; not so much in the number of ships-of-war she can prepare for sea; not so much even in her vast industrial and financial resources, as in the sympathies she commands on the Continent* as the great representative of civil and religious liberty.

* *And in America*, I would have added a few months since, but unhappily, the little sympathy lately exhibited by the English press and government for the cause of freedom in the United States, has done much, for the present, to deprive England of that great source of strength — the sympathies of a free and kindred people. In the end, however, the interested

Love and Fear—Whether it is best to be loved or feared is a question which has much divided the minds of men, and much confusion of ideas upon the subject still survives. Most men would be *both* feared and loved; but this cannot very well be, since the qualities which excite fear are generally the opposite of those which inspire affection. “There is a pretty passage in one of Lucian’s dialogues,” says Mrs. Barbauld, “where Jupiter complains to Cupid that though he has had so many intrigues, he was never sincerely beloved. ‘In order to be loved,’ says Cupid, ‘you must lay aside your ægis and your thunderbolts.’ ‘But,’ replied Jupiter, ‘I am not willing to resign so much of my dignity.’ ‘Then,’ returns Cupid, ‘leave off desiring to be loved.’ He wanted to be Jupiter and Adonis at the same time.”

efforts of the partisans of aristocratic and commercial interests in England, to discredit the political institutions and domestic policy of the American Union, will be properly appreciated. Naturally, between Democracy in America and Aristocracy in England there is little in common. Indeed, privileged classes are everywhere the natural foes of social and political equality, and of the institutions that promote them. The rivalries of trade, too, will always prevail. But, beyond these antagonisms, it is unnatural that between the commons of England, and the great body of free society in the United States, there should be other than a community of interests and reciprocal regard.



TEARS.

TEARS are Nature's lotion for the eyes.
The eyes see better for being washed
with them.

Beauty in Tears — Beauty is never so dangerous as when it is seen in tears, as it then discloses to the eye of love a tender heart as well as a lovely face. Like a blue sky flecked with light and fleecy clouds, each enhances the beauty of the other. With what exquisite intensity does the lover in Shakespeare exclaim —

“Oh father, what a hell of witchcraft lies
In the small orb of one particular tear!”

TEMPTATIONS.

IT is glorious to resist temptations: — it is safest to avoid them. Avoidance is easier than resistance.

THEOLOGIES.

ANY other than a cheerful theology is worse than none. Its essential element is disbelief in God's goodness. It is more to be deplored than skepticism, for while this only doubts the generally received, the other affirms the false.

THEORIES.

IN general, inquiry ceases when we adopt a theory. After that, we overlook whatever makes against it, and see and think, and talk and write, only in its favor. Indeed, when we have a snug, comfortable theory, to which we are much attached, they appear to us as a very mean set of facts that will not square with it.

THOUGHT.

THE pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts, and the great art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

Its simplest material wants first satisfied, the

next great need of humanity is of a more generous habit of thought and feeling.

The thought proves the man. "I think: therefore I am," is the philosopher's formula.

Nothing is so fragile as thought in its infancy; an interruption breaks it: nothing is so powerful, even to overturning empires, when it reaches its maturity.

All power is indeed weak compared with that of the thinker. He sits upon the throne of his Empire of Thought, mightier far than they who wield material sceptres. "There is no thought in any mind," says Emerson, "but it quickly tends to convert itself into a huge instrumentality of means."

There is even a character of indestructibility in noble thoughts. Time cannot impair their validity. Sung by the poet, or uttered by the sage, in some far-off tract of time, they fall upon the heeding ear of to-day as sweetly persuasive, or as sternly authoritative, as if sung or spoken but yesterday. Take, for instance, that thought

of Christ, "Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin," and the dew and freshness, as it were, of the morning of its utterance, is still upon it.

Thought and Action—Next to a life of stirring action is a life devoted to the study of the principles of action. But better than either is to blend the two—to round each day of earnest endeavor with an evening of thought. We learn but little of our experience except we muse upon it.

Thought and its Circulation—A good thought is indeed a great boon, for which God is to be first thanked; next he who is the first to utter it, and then, in a lesser, but still in a considerable degree, the friend who is the first to quote it to us. Whoever adopts and circulates a just thought, participates in the merit that originated it.

Clearness and Precision of Thought—The quality of vagueness enters too largely into our thoughts. It is very rare indeed that we find one who has attained to the art of clear think-

ing. The thoughts of most men, especially when they have no subject to engage their attention strongly, are vague, confused, and incoherent. Like the smoke which floats loosely through the air of a calm, clear morning, curling itself into a variety of beautiful but fantastic figures, thought, having no determinate object, hangs formless in their minds, apparent for a time, and is then swept off, leaving no trace of its existence. The cause of this is to be found in that few of us have been accustomed to think with precision. Our thoughts are indefinite, desultory, and indeterminate, because our minds are seldom vigorously exercised on subjects worthy of their powers. "We are born with faculties and powers," says John Locke, "capable almost of everything;* such at least as would carry us further

* And yet, he is nothing who has nothing, is a popular fallacy, widely acted on. A gentleman applied to a well-known editor in chief, in behalf of an indigent literary man, for employment as a writer on his paper. The editor seemed to lend a favorable ear to the application, when the gentleman, thinking to clinch the matter, added that his friend was quite destitute. "Then," said the journalist, "he will not do. My establishment," he in effect added, "is not a hospital for incurables. To write with power, a man must have in himself a sense of power, and especially a feeling of independence. How can he have this sense, whose power is not adequate to keep off want, or this feeling, who is obliged to

than can be easily imagined; but it is only the exercise of those powers which gives us skill in anything, and leads us towards perfection."

Thought and Events—The busiest of living agents are certain dead men's thoughts. Perhaps it is not too much to say, that nearly all great events, whose origin is known, may be traced back to certain great thoughts, which stand to them in the same relation as remote progenitors to illustrious descendants. It is not only in the very nature of thought to find its way into action, but to create and re-create all things, the subjects of its activity, into its own likeness. Indeed, the activity of our lives is but the working out, first of God's thoughts, and then of our own and the thoughts of other men. May we not hope then, that every great and just thought, will, sooner or later, find its proper embodiment?

Thought and Expression—Vigorous thoughts

write for bread?" Acute and plausible, but how unsound! All things possessed are first derived or acquired. Give employment, and you give independence, and with the exercise of power will come a sense of it.

shape their own expression. Indeed, it is rather the sign of a weak thought when the form in which it suggests itself can be improved. One may also know his good thoughts from a certain irradiation of feeling that attends their inception. Strong thoughts, like lightning, express themselves in flashes.

Thought and Feeling — Among the rare things in life is an intellect vigorous enough to exclude feeling from performing the office of judging. Few women, especially, are able to accomplish this much. Indeed, reason enters little into the affairs of men: into the affairs of women scarcely at all. They are governed by something better — feeling.

Thought and Labor — It seems almost a law of Nature that nothing greatly valuable can be gained except by labor. Especially is it idle for one to expect to acquire a habit of greater thoughtfulness, who flies from his thoughts the instant they become irksome to him. Our progress in striking into a new line of thought, as of action, is always toilsome; but the pain of the first attempt over, we at length become re-

conciled to, and at length delighted with, the employment. It is indeed with thought as Walton says it is with angling. "He that hopes to be a good angler," says that pleasant optimist,* "must not only bring an inquiring, searching, observing wit, but he must bring a large measure of hope and patience, and a love and propensity to the art itself; but having once got and practised it, then doubt not but angling will prove to be so pleasant, that it will prove to be like virtue, a reward to itself."

Thought and Observation—The distinction between thought and observation was well defined in a remark made to me of an uncommonly thoughtful lad, whose mind, usually busy with its inward experiences, rarely addressed itself to

* Among the best of the books deservedly held in high estimation, are those of good old Izaak Walton. One feels in reading him that he *was* "such a good old soul." There have been perhaps many wiser men, but it would be hard to find a character among the ancient worthies more worthy. To use his own quaint language, he was one "in whom there was a radical honesty"—"a man of great modesty, of a most plain and single heart, of an ancient freedom and integrity of mind." What he himself said of Herbert's poems may be more truly said of his own books, that they have "comforted many a dejected and discomposed soul, and charmed them into sweet and quiet thoughts."

outward phenomena. "He is," it was said, "a born metaphysician; perhaps the most of a thinker, and the least of an observer, for his age, to be found."

Outdoor and Indoor Thoughts—Our impressions usually relate to what is visible to us. Outdoor thoughts are therefore apt to be more comprehensive than indoor thoughts. Again:—Our indoor thoughts are usually subjective, introspective, or retrospective; our outdoor thoughts objective or prospective, and healthier in their tone. Indeed, Emerson well observes that "we go out daily and nightly to feed the eye on the horizon, and require so much scope, just as we need water for our bath." "The blue zenith," he adds, "is the point in which romance and reality meet." *

* Following this is a passage of such exceeding beauty that I am tempted to transcribe it, as Leigh Hunt has done before me—especially as it finely sustains what I have elsewhere said of the admirable union, in certain of Mr. Emerson's Essays, of poetry with philosophy. "It seems as if the day was not wholly profane," says he, "in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snow-flakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains; the waving rye-field; the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the mu-

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

ALTERNATIONS of city and country life deepen the interest of both. Therefore,

sical, streaming, odorous south wind, which converts all trees to wind-harps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames; or of pine logs which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sitting-room—these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion. My house stands on low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one stroke of the paddle, I leave the village politics and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without noviciate and probation. . . . These sunset clouds, those delicately-emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify and proffer much. I am taught the pooriness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enhancement and sequel to this original beauty. I am over-instructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please. I cannot go back to toys. I am growing expensive and sophisticated. I can no longer live without elegance; but a countryman shall be my master of revels. He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the world have called in Nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging gardens, garden-houses, islands, parks, and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder that the landed interest should be invincible in the state with these dangerous auxiliaries. These bribe and invite; not kings, not palaces, not men, not women, but these tender and poetic stars, eloquent of secret promises. We have heard what the

persons of competent means, having business in large cities, should have their residences a short distance out of them, where, in the quiet and retirement of a rural home, they can review the events of each busy day, and link the life contemplative to the life practical.

In town we grow active-minded; in the country, large minded. Cities afford more incitements to thought; but the country more opportunities for it. Life in the country is a continual appeal to the sense of the beautiful; a want of expansion characterizes life in a metropolis. In large cities men are like a crowd of angels, so closely packed together that, wanting to fly, they cannot find room in which to outstretch their wings. Cities, too, yield more of the material of thought, but thought of an inferior character. The country, then, is best as a thinking place—its harmonies of sound, color, and

rich man said, we knew of his villa, of his wine, of his company, but the provocation and point of the invitation came out of these beguiling stars. In their soft glances, I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles, or Paphos, or Ctesiphon. When the rich tax the poor with servility and obsequiousness, they should consider the effect of men reputed to be the possessors of Nature on imaginative minds. Ah! if the rich were rich, as the poor fancy riches!"

proportion, its grateful retirement and sweet repose, dispose to juster thought and purer feeling, and to more vivid conceptions of beauty and of grace.

And yet, the experiment of retiring altogether into the country to live, after many years passed in a great city, is seldom attended with success. A city is a museum of a larger size — a cabinet of curiosities — a strange collection of curious men and still more curious women — of objects and incidents infinite in their number and variety. Few, who have once lived altogether in them, can afterwards be content to live altogether out of them.

TRAVELLING.

NEW situations inspire new thoughts. Here is the benefit of travelling, much more than in mere sight-seeing. We lose ourselves in the streets of our own city, and go abroad to find ourselves.

People who live stationary in one spot see the great world through a very small window, and

acquire a feeling that space extends to the outskirts of their city or township, and there stops. Not so with the traveller. Moving from place to place, here to-day and there to-morrow, he "catches the manners living as they rise" of different peoples, sees and becomes one with Nature in her different moods, sheds his local personality, as the bird its plumage for one of brighter tints and more varied coloring, and comes round to his starting-point with more enlarged views, a more catholic spirit, and a newer and a fresher conception of the mysterious and infinite universe that lies around and about him. The reason why there are so many narrow-minded people in the world is, because there is so little travelling in it.*

* "Almost all men are over-anxious," says the poet Rogers. "No sooner do they enter the world, than they lose that taste for natural and simple pleasures so remarkable in early life. Every hour do they ask themselves what progress they have made in the pursuit of wealth or honor; and on they go as their fathers went before them, till, weary and sick at heart, they look back with a sigh of regret to the golden time of their childhood. Now travel, and foreign travel more particularly, restores to us in a great degree what we have lost. When the anchor is heaved, we double down the leaf; and for a while at least all effort is over. The old cares are left clustering round the old objects; and at every step, as we proceed, the slightest circumstance amuses and interests. All is new and strange. We surrender ourselves, and feel once again as children."

After-Benefits of Travel—Diversions, travel—experiences of every kind—profit and lead to thought, not so much immediately, as through the after-recollection and recalling of them. The product of these, like that of the farmer's seed, seldom comes in the same season wherein they are sown.

Incident of Travel—While strolling one day in the vicinity of Weehawken, and looking for the scene of the memorable duel between Hamilton and Burr, I observed a farm-wagon approaching, and hailed the driver of it with, "Ho there, can you tell me where it was Hamilton fell?" "Fell," said the countryman, "did any one fall about here? I had n't *hearn tell* of it. Did he hurt himself much?"

TREES.

IT is curious to what a degree one may become attached to a fine tree, especially when it is placed where trees are rare. I well remember an old tree in a little back-yard of an office in Wall Street, where I dreamed the dream of youth many years ago. Its every motion was

familiar to me. It had a sympathy for every mood, and from the sighing of its branches in a storm, to the laughter of its leaves when rustled by a gentler breeze, it expressed all emotions. It stood there the representative of the country I loved so well. In the sultry hours of summer it babbled of cool woods and shady nooks, as the little grass-plat near it did of the green fields; in autumn it was a great moral teacher, eloquent of mutation and decay; in winter, robed in snow, or resplendent with pendent icicles, it pleased the fancy, and filled to the full with a sense of beauty; and in the spring

“Hope came and blossom’d in its branches.”

TRIFLES.

WE interest ourselves too much in things that ought to have little interest for us. Suspension of the soul’s nobler functions is moral death.*

* Remembering, let us avoid, as far as possible, the fate of Sir Francis Vere, who died, according to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, because he had nothing else to do — a misfortune, as the Marquis Spinola well observed, “great enough to kill any man.”

Again: It is not good to elaborate trifles. The result should be worthy of the labor.

Trepidation about Trifles — Though prompt and decided, it may be, when business of real importance is to be transacted, we are often timid and hesitating in matters of mere punctilio. Who has not, indeed, more than once in his experience, torn up a half-dozen sheets of paper in writing some trifling note, whose only importance was in its form? I have even heard it said, of no less a man than De Witt Clinton, and by an eye-witness of the occurrence, that he was once so embarrassed by the necessity of replying ceremoniously to the address of a chairman of a committee, appointed to wait upon him, that he almost lost the power of speech. I have also been told, by an observer, that the able Secretary of State, Mr. Marcy, was in like manner once overwhelmed with confusion when called upon unexpectedly to make presentation of a sword. But, some men — and these were among the number — are nervous only in trifling matters: great occasions steady them.

TRUTH.

THE highest moral and religious truths are clearly enough recognized in the abstract, in the closet, in our moments of grief, solitude, or reflection, but we leave them behind us when we engage in the active duties of life, and allow ourselves to be governed by the lower considerations of interest or expediency.

It is even easier to find a score of men wise enough to discover the truth, than to find one who is intrepid enough, in the face of opposing prejudices, to stand up for it. Much of this is to be attributed to the early influences of unmanly teachings. How often, for instance, do we hear it said, in our youth, too, when our minds are most alive to impressions, that "the truth is not to be told at all times?" Doubtless, lest it should prejudice the interests of its too earnest adherents! But what interests? What are the interests that are opposed to the interests of truth? It were much to be wished that we could all agree as to the nature of this interest that consists in the suppression of truth, the "summit of being," as it has been called,

and as to how far a manly sincerity should be constrained to skulk behind a craven expediency.

Truth First, Truth Last, Truth Always— Hamlet, in the ghost scene, is a fine example of the questioning spirit pursuing its inquiries regardless of consequences. The apparition which affrights and confounds his companions, only spurs his not less timid, perhaps, but more speculative nature, into following and plying it with questions. Only thus should Truth be followed, with interest great enough to overmaster all fears as to whither she may lead, and what she may disclose.

Truth's Ultimate Triumph— Truth, like the sun, submits to be obscured, but, like the sun, only for a time.





VANITY.

VANITY in an old man is charming. It is a proof of an open nature. Eighty winters have not frozen him up, or taught him concealments. In a young person it is simply allowable: we do not expect him to be above it.

Vanity a Companionable Quality and a Social Good—Vanity makes of many indifferent men very obliging friends, moving them to courtesies from a desire of exciting esteem. So, too, an inordinate love of popularity in a public man has its good, as well as its ill effects, since it frequently transforms very selfish individuals into great public benefactors.

Vanity and Ostentation—Indeed, it is only as it becomes associated with ostentation that vanity disgusts. Thus, it is usually a piece of

vanity, mingled with ostentation, for one to proclaim the humbleness of his origin: what he aims at is to impress us with the remarkable talent that has raised him out of that condition. Again: people generally write their names legibly to a subscription list. In both instances it is the element of ostentation that offends.

Vanity an Universal Foible—In truth, vanity is universal. Does the reader deny this? A denial of vanity proves it. We profess to be without vanity, and in that very profession make a display of it. Nor does this involve any serious disparagement. "I give vanity fair quarter," says Franklin, "wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others who are within his sphere of action; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity, among the other comforts of life."

THE VIRTUES.

IT would be a curious subject of inquiry how far a man's very virtues, under the present

constitution of society, tend to aggravate its evils, by rewarding his temperance, industry, and enterprise with more of the good things of life than is consistent with either his own well-being or that of the community.

In our virtues and our vices we are more imitative than original, both being in large part borrowed from our age or companions. "Most people are so constituted," says Hawthorne, "that they can only be virtuous in a certain routine; an irregular course of life demoralizes them."

THE VOICE.

THE voice denotes the character. As well be found with a bunch of false keys in your pocket, as with a voice with a certain rogue's tone in it. Such a voice is equivalent to a conviction for petty larceny. Then there is the ruffian voice, and in pleasant contrast with it, the voice of high-souled courtesy, soft and flute-like, and conciliating in its tones. A bluff and hearty voice is rarely associated with meanness; with coarseness and violence it may be. A loud voice commands attention; a low voice

entreats it ; and both receive it according to the natures they address. There are also voices that a man can never be eloquent with. They are either too attenuated for the feelings to move along them, or so harsh that the finer sensibilities recoil from their tones. Essay a speech or a song with such a voice, and a word or two—a few notes—and the impracticability of the thing is at once demonstrated.





WALKING.

THE walk, also, discloses the character. A long stride indicates a long reach of purposes: a short step a tendency to mince matters: a placid and composed walk bespeaks the philosopher: he walks as if the present is sufficient for him; as if he owns the day, and that is wealth enough: a measured step is the expression of a disciplined intellect, not easily stirred to excesses: a hurried pace denotes an eager spirit, with a tendency to precipitate measures: the confident and the happy swing along, and need a wide sidewalk; while an irregular gait reveals a composite character, one thing to-day, another to-morrow, and nothing much at any time.

Advantages of Long Walks—Walking should be cultivated as an accomplishment. Excursive legs help to make an excursive intellect, and

among the "aids to reflection" not enumerated by Coleridge, in his work bearing that title, are long strolls. Children, especially, should be trained to walk long distances, and to despise short ones. Walking is a cheaper and more healthful exercise than riding, and it has the added advantage of training to endurance.*

Fatigue in Walking—The pleasure we might take in walking is impaired, more by the fear of getting fatigued, than by the actual fatigue it induces. After walking a certain distance, we think that we ought to be tired, and therefore feel so. In this, as in so many other things, distrust of our capacity limits it. Without superior powers of endurance, I have, for the greater part of my life, been accustomed to long strolls

* "It has been said," says Leslie, the painter, speaking of Rogers, the poet, "that temperance, the bath, the flesh-brush, and, above all, to avoid fretting, were his receipts for health. To these I can add another—fresh air; for he was a great walker, and it was his daily custom after breakfast (which was often a long meal, as he was fond of company at his breakfast) to go out and spend the greater part of the day in the open air, quite regardless of the weather, of which he never complained. I have often heard him express his surprise," Leslie adds, "that the most religious people were often among those who most abused the weather. 'They forget,' he said, 'who sends it.'"

in the country, and have usually avoided fatigue by thinking of something pleasanter.

Rural Walks — Rural walks are pleasanter than rural rides. The charm of the country is in its sights and sounds. On horseback, or in a carriage, we lose the beautiful feeling of oneness with Nature; the senses are not lulled by the hum of insects, the rustling of leaves, or the songs of birds. These, and more than these, the sweet and tender influences that steal into and give peace to the heart; the distant sounds that fall so sweetly on the ear, and that break only to illustrate and deepen the peacefulness of the scene, are all rendered inaudible by the clatter or clump of your horses' feet, or the roll of your wheels.

WANTS.

THE natural wants are few, and easily gratified: it is only those which are artificial that perplex us by their multiplicity.

Immoderate Wants — A great part of the wisdom of life consists in checking the growth of

immoderate wants. Our wants expand with our means of gratifying them, but seldom contract as those means fail us. It is even easier to increase our wants, be it ever so much, than to reduce them, be it ever so little.

Wants and Necessities — Nature has provided for the exigency of privation, by putting the measure of our necessities far below the measure of our wants. Our necessities are to our wants as Falstaff's pennyworth of bread to his any quantity of sack.

WAR AND WARRIORS.

GREAT conquerors, like great earthquakes, are principally remembered for the mischief they have done.

Every war involves a greater or less relapse into barbarism. War, indeed, in its details, is the essence of inhumanity. It dehumanizes. It may save the state, but it destroys the citizen.

An appeal to arms in vindication of a prin-

ciple involves a logical absurdity. Battles follow, but we may say of a battle as the mathematician asked of the poem — “What does it prove?” The forced recognition of a principle does not establish it as true, any more than the discomfiture of its adherents proves it to be false.

Before and After Wars — Before a war a nation's chief danger is from political demagogues; after a war from military demagogues. “Three fourths of the officers of the Revolution,” says Randall, in his “Life of Jefferson” — speaking of perhaps as pure a body of men as ever took up arms — “Three fourths of the officers of the Revolution came out of the war political consolidationists.”

Cost of Victories — The cost of victories is seldom appreciated. All other considerations are lost in the feelings of triumph which they inspire, and in estimating the advantages to which it is supposed they will give rise. Our thoughts are only of the losses of the vanquished, while on investigation they will be found, in most instances, to be not materially greater than those of the victor.

Fruits of Victories—States procure their fighting to be done by men who have the least material interest in what is fought for. To illustrate this: England belongs substantially to five or six classes—the nobility and gentry, professional men, merchants and manufacturers, and land and lease and bond holders. What of England does not belong to these classes is very small. And yet, deducting the small proportion of officers, it is from outside of these classes that her armies and navies are recruited, and her victories won. As little do political victories enrich the victors. Who that has once read them, does not often recall, with a saddened feeling, these verses of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, written on seeing a man with a heavy load on his back and a party symbol in his hat:—

“Poor fellow, what is it to you,
Or King or Restoration?
’T will make no difference to you
Whoever rules the nation.

“Still must thy back support the load,
Still bend thy back with toil;
Still must thou trudge the self-same road
While great ones share the spoil.”

Origin of Wars—Wars seldom spring out of
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a deliberate purpose to originate them. Leaders are rarely bad enough for that. Usually, we drift into them. They arise out of complications brought on by a too grasping ambition on one side, and an imperfect statesmanship on the other. I speak here of approximate causes. Besides these, there are other and deeper causes, growing out of the imperfect constitution of societies and governments. Thus, the present civil commotion in the United States is essentially a conflict of social forces. In the South we have largely the Asiatic form of society; and in the North a condition of society embodying the better elements and higher tendencies of European civilization. Out of this antagonism has arisen the present struggle—a dire calamity, especially in its immediate effects, but still promising a very large measure of good in its remoter results. The march of *our* armies is a march of ideas.

Soldier Life—Romancers and idealists, by investing the soldier's life with the colors of fiction, have done more to originate wars than even incompetent statesmen, turbulent demagogues, or incendiary orators. Not to speak of the dirt and

discomforts, the privations and hardships, of the common soldier in actual service, of the ignominy of his position in time of peace, and of his grossly inadequate pay for the work he is expected when called upon to perform,

"Nimepunce a day fer killen' folks comes kind o' low fer murder"—

if the novelists are to be believed, the life of an officer in the army is in peace a round of gayeties, and in war a succession of brilliant exploits, —his time being pretty equally divided between fancy balls and cannon balls. When wounded, too, he is restored to health by the delicate and unceasing attentions of some

"Woman, a ministering angel thou,"

who watches by his bedside with the most tender solicitude, and who is afterwards rewarded for her grateful interest by his devoting to her the life she has saved. But this is throwing the colors of the rainbow on a life, in peace, of infinite tedium, and in war, of suffering, danger, anxiety, and exposure beyond calculation.*

* No invidious reference is here intended to the brave men who have lately (while these pages have been passing through

War Ultimately Separable from Human Affairs

—In the infancy of societies, as in that of indi-

the press), in a spirit of patriotism (rising above considerations of personal interest to an appreciation of the obligations of public duty) entered the service of the United States, to uphold the honor and dignity of the American name, and to preserve for posterity the blessings of free government and free society. But, while yielding all honor to these loyal men, and while I appreciate the merits of the cause to which they have consecrated themselves, it is still a question whether the war for the Union is not to be deplored as involving a grave departure from a fundamental principle of our civil polity. At the end of the struggle, our government will have become, in part at least, a government of force instead of a government, as heretofore, resting purely upon the consent of the governed. Besides, among the questions suggested by late events, and by the present state of political affairs in the United States, are the following. First:—What will be the value of an Union reëstablished by the sword? Next:—Is there not implied in the word Union the idea of voluntary association? And if so, what sort of an Union will that be to which eight millions are parties only though compulsion? Again:—Through slavery the South has become essentially a semi-barbarous portion of the country; through slavery it has contributed, for years, but little more to the Union than private demoralization, and national dishonor. Why then should not the North have both acquiesced in, and rejoiced over, the withdrawal of the Slave States from a confederacy to which they contributed so little of either honor or dignity, strength or prosperity? And still again:—Granted that the United States, through an acquiescence in the withdrawal from the Union of the Slave States, would have suffered territorial loss. Does bulk of body make greatness of character? Does extent of territory make national greatness? These and other questions, too numerous to be even imperfectly stated here, make it at least doubtful whether the superior interests of the country, of civilization, and of humanity would not have been best promoted by the adoption of a policy of peaceable separation. And certainly,

viduals, the passions bear sway; in their maturity, or more advanced conditions, the nobler sentiments assert their supremacy. Indeed, the natural state of men, according to old Hobbes, is even a condition of "raising old Hobbes" with each other. Or, to quote his own more dignified language—language more in keeping with the gravity of the subject—"In the nature of man," says he, "we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation. The first use violence, to make themselves masters of other men's persons," &c.; "the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles; as a word, a smile," and the like. "Hereby," he adds, "it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war."* This statement of the philosopher of Malmsbury possesses great force, but it is still incomplete. In

the military procedure of all States, and necessarily of our own included, is at variance with those higher principles recognized as of binding force in every elevated system both of morals and religion.

* *Leviathan*, Bohn's Edition, 1839, page 112.

their natural state men go sword in hand to their objects ; in their corrupted state, purse in hand ; but in their better estate they will seek reason as their guide. War is *both* a natural and an unnatural evil : natural, in so far as it proceeds from certain natural passions ; unnatural, because it is opposed to reason, and the instincts of our better humanity.* As these become

* Although it is not, as I have before observed, within the purpose of these volumes to treat of passing events, I would say something more here on the subject of the present civil war in the United States, were it not that the time has not yet arrived to speak of it in adequate terms. The subject, besides, is too painful, and my mind too much imbued with the passions of the hour, to enable me to speak of it with that calmness and impartiality which should be brought to the consideration of such a topic. Whether, as before intimated, it was not a blunder in the North not to have disconnected its fortunes, at the outset of the rupture, from those of the South ; whether such a separation without a civil war has been at any time possible ; and especially, whether the violence, precipitation, and unscrupulous procedure of the leaders of the rebellion did not wholly preclude a peaceable separation, are questions which must be left to happier and more tranquil hours. As indicating, however, something of the spirit of the time, I will mention, though with an apology for its apparent levity in connection with so grave a subject, the following anecdote. While at Boston not long since (in March, 1861), I was asked by an accomplished essayist what was the state of public opinion in New York. I replied, "We have two parties there ; one that thinks we are going to the devil, and another that thinks the devil is going from us." "Ah," observed another, a distinguished author, "if the devil would only not insist upon taking every foot of ground from under us !"

more and more developed, wars, it is probable, will become less and less frequent, and finally altogether cease. It is to this that reason points, and for this, may I not say, that reason was given to us!

WINE.

GOOD wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used," says Shakspeare. Yes, "if it be well used!" Here, as the lawyers are accustomed to say, is "the whole case in a nutshell." Wine is indeed like a cat; you may play with it a thousand times, and yet get scratched at last. But beyond this, it will not do to disparage good tippie. Many men would never know what it is to have a magnanimous feeling were it not that they occasionally drink enough to escape from their habitual narrowness. Like Parnell's Miser —

"Conscious of wanting worth, they taste the bowl,
And feel compassion touch the grateful soul."

Indeed, stimulants are necessary. Nature craves them, and who shall resist her decrees? * The

* The use of wine is founded principally upon an idea — the idea that it inspires. If we drank merely to gratify our appetites, or to stimulate our senses, temperance reforms, to the fullest extent ever proposed, might possibly become univer-

question of greatest importance in regard to the use of stimulants is as to the kind and quantity best to be taken. Sometimes a favorite author, at other times only a favorite wine will give the needed fillip to the spirits. For my own part, I like them both. Inspiration from Shakespeare, and a bottle of Catawba, are alike acceptable.

A man may even be known by the drinks he prefers. Chaste men love the light, still wines; wits and roysterers, sparkling wines; heavy men, high wines; and coarse men, malt and spirituous liquors.*

sal and permanent, but there is this insuperable difficulty in the case, that we drink to think, to stimulate a torpid or jaded brain, to become good company, hoping to find in our tipples what Charles Lamb calls "a solvent of speech," to waken a higher interior life, and to be lifted out of the actual into the ideal. Besides, Nature gives us no appetites that are not, in a reasonable degree, to be gratified. The very penalties imposed for excesses in their gratification imply this. "*In vino*" there is not only "*veritas*" but sensibility. It makes the face of him who uses it to excess blush for his habits. Like Dryden's Bacchus —

"Flushed with a purple grace
He shows an honest face" —

a face reddened with shame—grown purple with Nature's indignation.

* This, I am aware, is opposed to an observation of Dr. Johnson. "Claret," said he, "is a drink for women and children, port is a drink for men, but brandy is a drink for heroes." To heroes alone then let it be held sacred!

WISHES.

ENOUGH of resolution should accompany our wishes to make them take the form of determinations—enough of sagacity to direct them to the practicable. It is a waste of heart and brain to wish for the unattainable.

The wishes afford an indication of the character. The fame of Henry the Fourth of France chiefly rests upon his wish that he might put a fowl into the pot of every peasant in his realm; and, certainly, the character of Burns never appears so amiable as when he tells us—

“E’en then a wish, I mind its power,
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I, for poor auld Scotland’s sake,
Some useful plan or book might make,
Or sing a sang at least.”

WIT AND HUMOR.

WE take life too seriously: the office of wit is to correct in us this tendency. By his provocations to good-natured merriment, a humorist of the first water contributes as much to

the sum of happiness as the gravest of philosophers. Wit is to discourse what suavity is to manners: it lends a charm to intercourse, and a grace to speech; it banishes *ennui*, and enlivens society. It even dispels care. What distressed author, for instance, but forgets his straitened circumstances in laughing at that proposed motto of Sydney Smith for the "Edinburgh Review" — "*Tenui Musam meditamur avena*" — "We cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal?"

Humor, without the element of refinement blended with it, runs to burlesque; with the addition of grace, it becomes wit.

Burlesque Humor — By common consent of the refined, burlesque humor is interdicted as low. Ladies, a significant circumstance, seldom indulge in it. They even compromise their claims to refinement by laughing at it. I refer more particularly to that species of humor which consists in linking the forms of heroic speech to trivial objects or familiar facts, of which the following may be taken as examples: —

One more blow, and Coney Island 's free !

Or, —

Alas, alas, it is no dream !
The pork and beans are all gone.

Or, —

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself has said,
As 'gainst his bed he bump'd his head,
Oh, crackee !

These sallies of mock heroism, it may be, are ludicrous enough, but still, the spirit that delights in such sallies is akin to that of the scoffer. There is not enough of the heroic in the world to make it worth while to jeer at it.

Wit and Dignity — The wit must disclaim relationship to the jester to be respected. Else, we may love the man we laugh with, but not to the point of veneration. Dignity is the inseparable accompaniment of all high ideals.

Wit and Good-Nature — Wit never appears to greater advantage than when it is successfully exerted to relieve from a dilemma, palliate a deficiency, or cover a retreat. When Mrs. Siddons knelt to implore her father's pardon, for having married contrary to his wishes, he was

reminded that he had threatened, if she ever married an actor, to discard her forever. "Well, well," said he, good-naturedly, "I can still forgive her without breaking my word. The gentleman is *not* 'an actor,' whatever he may think himself." Here the wit was not brilliant, but it was still of a kind that always gives pleasure, being linked to something better than itself—a kindly and forgiving nature. Indeed, wit finds its highest expression when it is thrown forward as a shield to cover the weak, the erring, or the fallen.

Wit, Humor, and Horse-Play—Besides wit and humor, there is still another quality, a sort of disowned connection of theirs, whose province it is to amuse, namely, horse-play. Wit is for gentlemen and gentlewomen;—it lights up the eye, and *inspires* a smile, and is useful, especially to ladies with fine teeth, in the way of affording an opportunity for display; humor is for the amusement of men and women who are not so gentle, and elicits laughter, a sound seldom heard in the austere circles where fashion and ceremony reign—except a silvery peal for effect, or a sweet burst of childish glee—

while horse-play is for the less refined, and produces, in the one sex, those extraordinary performances known as smirks, giggles, and grins, and in the other, guffaws or horse-laughs.

Wit and Impertinence — Wit and a brisk impertinence are often confounded. The nature of wit is to please; that of impertinence is to wound, offend, or humiliate.

Inconvenience of a Reputation for Wit — Established wits lose their reputation for wit when they forsake the field of humor for that of serious discourse. What right have these people, we are apt to think, to be serious? Are they not going out of their true characters? Is not their mission in this world to amuse? Invited out or welcomed into society because

“Gentle dulness ever loves a joke,”

their unlooked-for gravity disappoints us of that promised enjoyment which their appearance in company always heralds. Under such circumstances, our feeling becomes one of impatience, and we are inclined to ask, querulously, as the little boy did in the hearing of the celebrated

diner-out, when his wit, like the dinner, was somewhat behindhand — “Pray, now, when is the gentleman going to be funny?”

Puns and Punsters — The humor in most puns is inappreciably small. The punster is not a wit. He has not dignity enough for the character. He mistakes the nature of wit. Wit must be without effort. Wit is play, not work; a nimbleness of the fancy, not a laborious effort of the will; a license, a holiday, a carnival of thought and feeling, not a trifling with speech, a constraint upon language, a duress upon words.

Wit not Resolvable by Analysis — Wit, like poetry, is insusceptible of being constructed upon rules founded merely in reason. Like faith, it exists independent of reason, and sometimes in hostility to it. It also resembles poetry as defined by Burke, in being “the art of substantiating shadows, and of lending existence to nothing.” A curious circumstance, too, connected with wit is, that the more it is examined the less it appears to be wit. Familiarity with a jest lessens our appreciation of it. Perhaps for

this reason we can never be quite certain, of our own knowledge, that we have ever said anything very witty. Laughter, though the best test of it, is still partial and uncertain, for laughter is also excited by folly, and that which shakes one man's sides, may move another to scorn.

Wit and Satire—Satire is an abuse of wit. It corrects few evils. It is too much like the reproof of ill-nature. The reader travels with the satirist in a crusade of fault-finding, oblivious that the expedition may have been planned to carry the war into his own country. At the best, sarcasms, bitter irony, scathing wit, are a sort of sword-play of the mind:—you pink your adversary, and he is forthwith dead:—and then you deserve to be hung for it.

Wit of the Scriptures—The Bible is not exactly the place to look for wit, yet the search would not go unrewarded. Witness the following confession of Agur. It is exquisite:—

“There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not:

“The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship

in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid."

Wit and Self-Complacency—Wit is usually allied with a certain self-complacency. Thus, the first thing we do after saying a good thing is—to chuckle over it. And not only do we thus felicitate ourselves when we have uttered a good word, but few of us, I believe, are above the pardonable weakness of feeling distressed when we have lost an opportunity of making a good-natured retort, from its not occurring to us in season.* Even bitterness of feeling gives way

* A lively instance of this occurs in Leigh Hunt's "Autobiography," where he relates the mortification he recollects, after an interval of many years, to have felt at having let slip an occasion of this kind. Speaking of his first literary effort, he says: "My book was unfortunately successful everywhere, particularly in the metropolis. The critics were extremely kind; and as it was unusual at that time to publish at so early an age, my age made me a kind of young Roscius in authorship. I was introduced to literati, and shown about among parties. My father taking me to see Dr. Raine, Master of the Charter-House, the Doctor, who was very kind and pleasant, but who probably drew none of our deductions in favor of the young writer's abilities, warned me against the perils of authorship, adding, as a kind dehortative, that the shelves were full. It was not until we came away that I thought of an answer which I conceived would have annihilated him. 'Then, sir,' (I should have said,) 'we will make another.' Not having been in time with this repartee,

to self-complacency when we have succeeded in giving a witty or energetic expression to it.

Wit and Sensibility—Sorrow is never more sorrowful than when it jests at its own misery. Indeed, vividness of wit has its origin in quickness of sensibility. Thus, the most brilliant flashes of wit come from a clouded or incensed mind, as lightnings leap only from an obscured firmament. Or, as has been elsewhere more touchingly said, — “A simile may be bright while the heart is sad—the rainbow is beautiful in the air while beneath is the moaning of the sea.”

Wit and Wisdom—Wit is better as a seasoning than as a whole dish by itself. Fully to respect the wit, we must feel that he is capable of something better than wit. The charm of even Shakspeare's wit is in its being so generally associated with something nobler—his wit with wisdom, his humor with sentiment, with

I felt all the anguish of undeserved and unnecessary defeat, which has been so pleasantly described in the ‘Miseries of Human Life.’ This, thought I, would have been an answer befitting a poet, and calculated to make a figure in biography.”

taste, with sensibility. A flash of wit is best when it is also a flash of truth.

It is just possible to be a trifle too wise, or wise out of place.

"Devout at play, wise at a ball,"

says Dryden, in one of his satires. So also, it is possible to be too witty to be earnest, and too earnest to be witty. What Bacon says of love, applies as well to the vanity of wit — "Great spirits and great business," he says, "do keep out this weak passion."

And finally: One cannot be witty always: equally impossible is it to be wise always. In our efforts to retain the wisdom we have acquired, an embarrassment arises like that of the little boy who was scolded for having a dirty nose. "Blow your nose, sir." "Papa, I do blow my nose, but it won't stay blowed."

"*Yankee*" * *Wit and Humor* — Of humor of character — the humor which springs from odd

* The term "*Yankee*" means "invincible," according to its Indian origin. See "*Diary of American Revolution*," vol. i. p. 86.

traits and grotesque evolutions of character — Americans have little ; of humor of manners — the humor that consists in eccentric habits of action and modes of speech — except in certain parts of New England — still less. The most amusing presentation of some of the most racy peculiarities of “Yankee” speech, character, and manners, is of course to be found in the “Biglow Papers.” Besides exhibiting certain grotesque elements in American life and character, there is also a wonderful truth of serious portraiture in these humorous sketches of Lowell. His humor is as bright as a flame, but also as consuming. His satire wraps its subject around like a conflagration. It plays with it, with a cruel glee, till it reduces it to a charred mass, or a blackened cinder.* Of American *wit*,

* Indeed, the “Biglow Papers” of Lowell, like the “Yellowplush Correspondence” of Thackeray, have more admirers abroad than at home. Both humorists are too disparaging in the tone of their humor. People do not like to have their peculiarities hit off too sharply. Intending to refer to that peculiarity of Americans of speaking through their noses — “Mrs. B.,” said I, to a charming woman, “do you know that you have a nasal twang to your voice ?” The lady colored ; then looked surprised, and then indignant. I hastened to explain. “Most Americans have, and you, as an American, only share the peculiarity.” But the explanation came too late. The general truth was disregarded, and only its personal application taken notice of. A proper rebuke for an ungente way of sug-

there is, in individuals, much more, and of the finest quality. Not to mention the exquisite touches of Washington Irving, witness the altogether characteristic vein of Hawthorne, and the keen flashes of Oliver Wendell Holmes. The stream of his wit, like a river bathed in sunshine, glitters as it flows.

WOMEN.

NEXT to God we are indebted to women, first for life itself, and then for making it worth having.

Women and their Beauty — Women regret nothing so much as the want or the loss of beauty. Nor is it to be wondered at. Do they covet power? Beauty is power. Do they covet love? Beauty excites it. And indeed it must be a proud thing, not to be able to turn but where admiring eyes and subject hearts are there to greet the queen that captivates them.

The beauty of some women is even of that gesting it! Especially to a lady, chiefly those truths should be told that have something flattering in them.

kind that improves by time, and that promises to reach its perfection only when time shall be no more. In the "daily beauty" of their lives, we read a foreshadowing of that happier existence beyond, where all is pure, and noble, and progressive.

Women and their Beaux—It is a circumstance of which intelligent men take notice with a mixture of envy and jealousy, that superior women so readily accept the attentions of inferior men. I once asked a charming miss, who was herself no exception to the rule, the reason of this, when she replied that ladies were fond of attentions, and so long as they received them, they were not so particular as to the sources they came from. "Besides," said she, "however excellent men of sense are as husbands, they make very indifferent beaux: they are so dreadfully in earnest in what they say or do, and overpower you so much with their sense, that it is a positive relief to turn to one of those more amusing gentlemen." "Well," said I, a little nettled by this explanation, "if sense is so little appreciated, teach me to talk nonsense, that I may make myself more agreeable to you." "Oh," said she,

“you are doing that very well already. But seriously,” added she, as she saw my countenance fall at this sally, “the greatest objection to sensible men, next to their being so few in number, is that they prefer to be the subject of their own whims, rather than of ours. A man of sense enthrones one among us as the queen of his affections, and restricts his attentions to her alone, while every one of these heroes of the drawing-room, as you call them,* is the loyal subject of at least half-a-dozen sovereign mistresses, who, however, never permit him to approach their throne but to bow before it, and to bear away their commands.”

Brilliant Women—Brilliant women are usually wanting in a certain unity of character. Their strength is chiefly in their impulses. They are brilliant by flashes. Variable in their moods, their feelings swing between ecstasy and the dumps.

* Not to do injustice to the ladies-man, however, let us say of him that he finds in the society of ladies his appropriate sphere. By his agreeable manners, engaging small-talk, and his manifold little attentions, he contributes largely to their amusement, and is a more general favorite with the sex than abler men commonly deserve to be.

Brilliant women, too, are seldom long true to particular forms of thought. A certain mental waywardness or variableness distinguishes them. Their views spring out of their sensibility, and while this adds to their piquancy, it by no means insures their permanence.

Woman's Destiny Early Determined — A woman's destiny is usually decided before twenty-five; a man's often does not fairly begin till after forty. Before twenty-five a woman's greatest triumph — the conquest of a noble husband — has to be achieved; not till after forty did Cromwell draw his sword, Cowper take up his pen, or Franklin fully enter upon his rôle of statesman, philosopher, and patriot.

Woman's Love — Though sufficiently variable in opinion, and, perhaps, somewhat capricious in their tastes, women are unalterable in the depth and earnestness of their affections. It is the nature of women to love devotedly. A woman's love, like lichens upon a rock, will still grow where even charity can find no soil to nurture itself.

Women as Maidens—There is a youthful period in the beautiful natures of some women, when they are too innocent to calculate the proprieties of life, and when they are almost sinless in the very act of sinning. Their first steps astray are the steps of innocence mistaking its way.

Women as Matrons—“The strong hours conquer us,” says Schiller. I know of few things more saddening to the spirits than to meet, after the lapse of years, with one—now sobered by time and family cares into a grave and formal matron—whom we had parted with in the flush and bloom and heyday of beautiful girlhood. The heart is pained to observe the change wrought in that face, once so radiant with hope and joy. We read in the subdued expression of the eye, in the still white but more marked expanse of brow, the history of many varied hours.

“Years have passed on, and left their trace
Of graver care and deeper thought;
And unto us the calm, cold face
Of manhood, and to her the grace
Of woman’s pensive beauty brought.”*

* Whittier.

And then, too, as we take upon our laps the timid, smiling, bashful subjects of her maternal pride — the beautiful reflections of her own early self — as we kiss their pretty lips, and listen to their artless prattle, we are reminded, oh, how painfully, that they also are subjects of change.

Women as Mothers — They who hold the sex lightly, and who are accustomed to speak of women in terms of disparagement, can scarcely have been spectators of the watchful tenderness, the anxious solicitude, displayed in a thousand touching incidents, of a mother for her child. They can scarcely have witnessed her self-sacrificing devotion to her children, her patient and untiring performance of the many laborious offices of educational training, or their tongues would falter in the utterance of one word of detraction.

It is a beautiful trait in the character of a fond mother, when she happens to have a child less attractive in person or disposition than her other children, to lavish upon it a more than usual expression of affection. Her true heart tells her that their beauty will win friends for her handsomer children, and she seeks to make

amends to the less favored darling for possible future neglect by a larger measure of present tenderness.

A mother's love is indeed the golden link that binds youth to age, and he is still but a child, however time may have furrowed his cheek, or silvered his brow, who can yet recall, with a softened heart, the fond devotion, or the gentle chidings, of the best friend that God ever gives us.

Women by Nature all Aristocrats—The superior delicacy of woman's nature makes her intolerant of the gross and the unrefined, and to exclude these as much as possible from their charmed circles, women have originated, indirectly and through their influence, certainly not a few of the distinctions in society. The ceremonious usages of polite society are almost wholly of woman's invention. Besides this, fond of adulation, beautiful women prize their loveliness largely as it brings them homage, and even intellectual women, loving admiration, use their minds as women of fortune their wealth,—to dazzle.

Woman's Power of Persuasion —

"In her youth

There is a prone and speechless dialect,
Such as moves men : beside, she hath prosperous art
When she will play with reason and discourse,
And well can she persuade."

The sometime proposed admission of females to practice in courts of law is subject to a serious objection—the handsome would win all their causes, and the homely would lose them. "Arguments out of a pretty mouth are unanswerable," says Addison. A beautiful woman, who has added the graces of art to the charms of nature, and who, by assiduous culture, has made her mind as attractive as her person, would have but little difficulty, I imagine, in convincing a susceptible jury of almost anything. And then, the old fable of the Syrens would be every day realized. Thought-laden words pass for little beside the light jibes of flippant Beauty.

"Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw,"

Reason is ever the dupe of appearances. Indeed, no drug, no potion, no enchantment, works so subtly and so quick as the charm that resides in a beautiful face. In the assemblages of

the gods, do not all eyes turn from Jupiter and Juno to Venus and Apollo? And, before such a face as that of Miss Gunning (afterwards Elizabeth Duchess of Hamilton and Brandon, and Duchess of Argyle,*) Wisdom herself would deem it presumption to do more than admire.

Woman's Whims—“As numerous as—as”—
“As the sands of the sea-shore,” suggested a lively lady, wishing to help the speaker out in an oratorical flourish. “No,” said he, “I wish to speak more comprehensively—as woman’s whims.”

All extremes find their home in a woman of sensibility. Behind her smiles, what tears! And from graces that enchant, how readily she passes to whims that disenchant! As with Shakspeare’s Venus,—

“A thousand spleens bear her a thousand ways.”

Woman's Worth—But still, with all their foibles, women are better than men. What sa-

* See an exquisitely beautiful portrait of her sweetest of faces in “George Selwyn and his Contemporaries;” Vol. 2, Bentley’s Ed. 1848.

crifices are they not capable of making; how unselfish are they in their affections; how abiding is their love! They enchant us by their beauty, and charm us by their conversation. They add grace and a softer coloring to life, and assist us to bear its asperities. In our youth they are our instructors; in sorrow, our comforters; in sickness, the sweet beguilers of our misery. They are the only divinities on earth. Alas, that so many of them are fallen divinities! But who is it that makes them so? Who is it that takes advantage of their weakness, when that weakness should be their best claim to protection? Let him answer who abuses them.

It is among the poor that the truest worth of woman is disclosed. Women in superior circumstances have less in their conditions to develop their nobler qualities. It was chiefly through her limited means that I came to know and to revere my mother's noble qualities of character, and her surprising capacities of self-sacrifice. A more ample fortune would scarcely have afforded that scope for the display of the virtues peculiar to her sex, and which her nar-

row resources, considerable family, and the necessity of providing for it, so abundantly evoked.

THE WORLD,

(AS IT APPEARED TO ME TWENTY YEARS AGO.)*

WHAT a bugbear is the world, and in what awe does it hold us! It exercises the severest espionage over us, and calls us rigidly to account for all our actions; it requires us to stand cap in hand to it, to bow and cringe before it, to obey its behests, and to fear its censure. And yet, this arrogant world is after all but a somewhat foolish, and often a very evil-minded, world. Tenacious of error, and slow to receive new truths, it has made martyrs of the good, and persecuted the wise; selfish and tyrannical, it fawns on the strong, and oppresses the weak; corrupt, its opinions can be bought by show; capricious, it has its favorites whom it intoxicates with its praises or its favors — but they are not long such — caressed to-day, they are discarded to-morrow.† Such is the world; in

* About which time this impression of it was written.

† Great positions seldom confer great happiness, never great in-

striving to please which we displease the gods, and to which we cannot be true without being false to ourselves.

THE WORLD,

(AS IT APPEARS TO ME TO-DAY, AT THE AGE OF FORTY.*)

THIS is indeed a beautiful world ! ” exclaimed my mother, one fine day, with enthusiasm, and I loved her all the more that at the age of

dependence, and not always even great honor. The great artist is the slave of his ideal. The power we covet at a distance, turns out, in possession, to be little more than a gilded slavery. “ Whom the grandeur of his office elevates over other men,” said the Chancellor Daguesseau, “ will soon find that the first hour of his new dignity is the last of his independence.” Consider the statesman’s position. It adds much to the embarrassment of a statesman, under every form of government, that the people, or his superiors in authority, are pretty sure, in the end, to hold him responsible for even their own ill-advised influence over his measures. If he resists their solicitations, he braves a present destruction ; if he yields, he perhaps but postpones his fate.

* The world is this to one, that to another, and still something quite different to a third, according as it is seen in the light of different principles, under the influence of elevating or depressing circumstances, or through the medium of a more or less developed character. The world but rarely seems a generous world to him who has been hardly used in it ; though the ills he has suffered have only proceeded from a few, or from laws beneficent in their general operation, though exceptionally rigorous. Timon, therefore, may be excused for the austerity

sixty she could still think so. To have been in many and various situations in life, and not to have found contentment in any of them, is not, I am persuaded, so much our natural allotment as a grievous perversion of it. Such has not, thanks to the Great Father! been my experience. Life, to me, has had, and still has, manifold attractions, and my only regret, in connection with some of its situations, has been that I could not continue in them. I can truly say with Charles Lamb, in one of his most exquisite and characteristic passages — “I care not to be carried with the tide that smoothly bears human life to eternity; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age at

of his invectives. The caprice of fortune, the coldness of friends — “the hardest stone that melancholy can throw at a man” — and, more than these, the limitations of an imperfect because undeveloped character, left him little other resource, to ease his pain, than to rail. A more advanced character — that of the philosopher — a character attainable by all men, in a greater or less degree — would have enabled him to endure even persecution with less acerbity, since, to the philosopher, the perfection of tolerance is the toleration of intolerance.

which I have arrived, I, and my friends; to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age; nor drop, like mellow fruits, as they say, into the grave."

THE WORLD,

(AS IT WILL, PERHAPS, APPEAR TO US HEREAFTER.)

WHEN all comes to be known, it will be seen that, in our strength and in our weakness, in our virtues and in our infirmities, we are all of one brotherhood. Perhaps, indeed, to know all will be to excuse all. At least, the sum of all causes is equal to all effects.



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